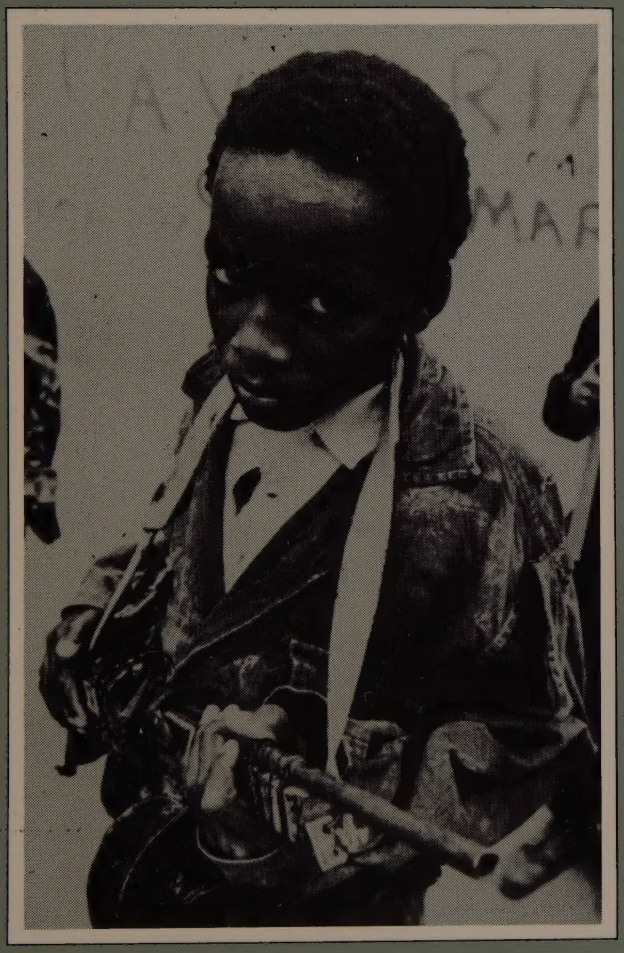
Improvised Modified Firearms

Deadly Homemade Weapons



J. David Truby and John Minnery

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Deadly Homemade Weapons

J. David Truby and John Minnery

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Improvised Modified Firearms:
Deadly Homemade Weapons
by J. David Truby and John Minnery

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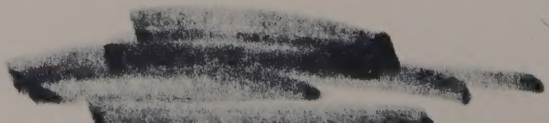

DEDICATION

The authors wish to dedicate this book to Nancy, who put up with an incredible amount of effluvia for four days in April, plus all the hassle that followed, and to Chris, who finally got his credit. Thank you,. . . . . You know.

OUR THANKS TO

. . . . so many friends who were kind enough to share information, anecdotes, opinions, and photos for this book. Some folks, though, went way beyond the normal call of duty to help us, and we want the world, or at least that portion of it reading this book, to know we appreciate their great help.

Following are some very special people:

HM1 Francis Brown, USN, our untiring researcher in Asia with global contacts; Jim Crombie, New Zealand Police Ballistician; George Fassnacht, firearms authority; Mario Gainov, firearms designer; Major Richard Keogh, USA, an unselfish friend always ready to help; Bob Koch, firearms historian; Jack Krcma, a firearms expert with a respected international reputation.

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We also wish to offer a heary "THANK YOU" to many other persons, institutions, agencies, organizations, et. al. who contributed so much. Where possible and or appropriate, credit is given in the text.

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Introduction

Two men in an American town infamous for its official antigun policies and laws were charged by police with "brandishing a firearm or an object similar-appearing to a firearm" following a neighborhood disturbance call to 911. Arguing over a dog's property trespass, according to the police statement, "one actor [that's cop jargon for person] pointed a firearmlike object at his neighbor. The other actor then pointed his own firearmlike object back at his neighbor."

Both men were found guilty of disturbing the peace. And what were the lethal-force "firearmlike objects" they had been pointing at each other? Their fingers.

That story is true. It came from Jerry Constantino, venerable publisher of *Shooting Times* magazine, and has been verified. Apparently, many officials in our country, states, cities, and towns don't trust us with firearms. Some are so blinded in their rush for gun control that they even prosecute finger-pointers because fingers resemble gun barrels. I wonder how these bureaucratic windbags deal with citizens who shoot off their mouths? The semiological implications would be intellectually staggering if only intellectual reasoning were involved in gun-control arguments. It rarely is.

Never a bastion of reasoned or intellectual journalism, the no-brow *New York Post's* antigun hysteria dove beneath the surface of silliness with its 1982 tirade to ban the ever-dangerous nail gun, a truly deadly assault weapon in the minds of the *Post's* patronizing panderers of distortion and disinformation.

Following a freak construction site accident at a New York City restaurant in which a girl was critically injured, the *Post's* editorial zanies shrilled out that "deadly cartridge-fired nail guns . . . can be obtained with nightmarish ease by anyone who wants one." In another emotional burst of what reads like journalistic satire, the *Post* noted in its editorial that "these (nail guns) are a mugger's dream come true. They can be swiftly converted into deadly zip guns with materials found on the average handyman's workbench, and owning one is perfectly legal."

I'm not certain if they meant that zip guns are legal (no), that nail guns are legal (yes), or that workbenches are legal (yes).

A thorough check of New York police records for several years after the incident turned up no criminal misuse of any nail guns. Apparently, the construction industry has been able to get back to work without having to register its tools.

Although these are only two examples, it is gun control that caused

the current reissue of this book years after it had gone out of print. The major constitutional issue of gun control makes the content of and message from this book more important than when it was first published. Then, unlike now, our prime freedoms (i.e., our treasured Bill of Rights) were not in the very imminent danger that they are as these words are written.

That gun control has become a cultural jihad in the U.S. and Canada is as obvious as the fact that George Bush is a hard-core, congenital prevaricator. According to its own leaders, the major objective of Handgun Control, Inc., is the total confiscation of all privately held firearms in the United States. Their strategy, and again they make no secret of it, is to nibble and chip away at the gun control issue over the years until they achieve total prohibition.

However, this book was not written as a polemic on the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. When John Minnery and I wrote it in the mid-1970s, the high-technology small arms that are standard issue today were still being field-tested in Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

Back in that era, the have-nots and others without access to the issue weapons made their own or modified someone else's for their own use. Today, of course, every have-not despot, rebel, revolutionary, or terrorist has access to the same armament as the professional mercenaries hired by the establishment haves of the world.

In 1975, if Johnny didn't get his gun he simply made it or modified it. Today, Johnny buys it on the street of any city in the world. Or, the Johnnies rip it off from some other have-not who got it from our CIA, or their Mossad, or any ex-KGB cells still around. They also buy it from one of ten major arms-producing nations. Thus, while small-arms technology has come a long way since our first book was planned in 1970, improvised/modified firearms remain relatively uncomplicated and basic, e.g., a fully automatic weapon is far easier to design and build than a semiautomatic one. Today, construction of all of the improvised/modified designs remains well within the abilities of the mechanically unskilled citizen who does not have access to firearms through any other means.

The object lesson? Gun prohibition doesn't work. A free people is an armed people. And, if you take away free people's firearms, as the One World Order Police State that now owns America is doing, they will make others. As this book points out, while the method, means, and technology are simple, convenient, and in place, police-state dictators provide the motive. Both ancient and current histories are replete with cogent examples.

Considering how long this book has been out of print, I know that John and I are welcoming an entire new generation of readers. And, I suspect that given the passage of time between then and now, plus the lack of technical literature on this topic, many of you are going to be awed by the sheer accomplishment of the people who produced the firearms featured in this book.

Each firearm described and shown on these pages is a response from an unarmed or underarmed citizen or group to the issued arsenal of a power establishment. These pages document the extremes to which people will go if normal supplies of firearms are denied or if special mission firearms are required and are otherwise unavailable. In addition, they document the absolute folly of firearms prohibition as advocated by the antigun activists of the world, i.e., America's ruling power elite.

I would be pleased to hear from readers who have photos, news clippings, accounts, reports, or other data, textual and graphic, related to improvised/modified firearms. I feel the research that John and I did in the '70s did not complete the job, so I plan to publish a third volume of improvised/modified firearms. Please send your information to me:

J. David Truby
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P.O. Box 1307
Boulder, CO 80306-1307

I will answer each letter personally and promptly. Thank you for your attention, and I hope you'll enjoy your reading of these next 139 pages.

J. David Truby
Sanibel, FL
December 1991

Between two groups of men that want to make inconsistent kinds of worlds I see no remedy except force . . . It seems to me that every society rests on the death of men.

— Oliver Wendell Holmes
Jurist

The Way It Is

China's Mao Tse-Tung is a wise old man, as evidenced by his many little homilies, such as "All political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." If it's hard proof you need, the first use of real guns was in the early 14th century by the merchant class to get political power away from their feudal lords in Western Europe.

Then, in 15th century Italy, armies hired by commoners attacked the stone fortresses of wealthy feudalists. When the noblemen and their armored horsemen rode out with swords and lances, sporting full battle gear, the attackers fired guns which punched large, round holes through the armor and the noblemen underneath.

From that point on, the gun was on its way as a very effective kingdom builder and destroyer. Millions of dollars, and equivalent, genius has been expended to produce weapons technology which would both boggle the mind and chill the soul. We have progressed to the point of having firearms for every possible target under every conceiveable situation. And, in a corner of history's international arsenal is a small, but very important genre of firearm — the improvised or modified gun.

The word improvise comes from the Latin *in-not + providere, forsee,* meaning unforseen with some lack of preparation, or, making do with whatever is available. With firearms, this definition is almost literal, i.e., when an emergency or other need arises, and no real firearm is available, one is improvised depending upon the situation, environment, mission, etc.

Obviously, if a real firearm were available, a person probably would not utilize an improvised version. The modified version is usually produced to meet the needs of a particular mission or situation, i.e., cutting down a rifle or shotgun to conceal it for urban terrorist use.

The casual reader might lump all modified improvised firearms into the class of juvenile zip guns and let it go at that. One police officer wrote to the authors, "This is an oddball topic . . . Why put it in print?"

While emotion may be on this man's side, the facts of history are

not. Whenever there has been a desperate need for firearms or a situation in which professionally manufactured firearms were not available or desirable, people have produced or improvised them from readily available materials. Legal means to stop such actions are worthless because the users of these weapons — soldiers, guerrillas, terrorists, juvenile delinquents, spies, street fighters, prisoners, et. al., — place their own needs above the theory and paper of law.

As John Wootters wrote in a 1964 issues of GUNS & AMMO, "When the Viet Cong came up short on guns, they went to work with hacksaw, file and forge to build their own." Then, like Edgar A. Poe's raven, he added, "Where people are weaponless sheep, the man with a gun, *any* kind of gun, is the wolf."

Another reason improvised weapons are used is the constant rise in prices for production quality weapons sold legally and illegally. While the U.S. Congress, aided by domestic weapons makers, tries to rid the nation of "cheap, foreign handguns," prices for domestic models climb beyond the purchasing ability of many buyers. Stolen weapons sell for prices four and five times the list price of a legal weapon. Thus, street people, revolutionaries, and petty criminals turn to converted, cheap, or easily produced firearms.

Researching this book, the authors decided to explore the following basic areas, but without formal limits.

1. Improvised firearms behind jail and prison walls
2. Firearms improvised and modified by espionage and other clandestine agencies of various countries
3. Military and para military improvised modified firearms
4. Improvised Modified firearms from the world's streets and alleys
5. Resistance groups of history — their copies, improvisations and modifications of firearms
6. Improvised and "homemade" silencers
7. The improvised modified firearms of modern terrorist groups from the various domestic revolutions
8. All other unusual, dynamic, clever, inventive, disastrous, etc. ideas and designs for improvised and modified firearms throughout history to today

The degree of research success is, of course, this book. Obviously, more material was available in some areas than others, but as our intent was the presentation of all collected data, we did not attempt to make this book conform to a premeditated formula or format.

However, it is fair to note that improvised modified weapons, while found in large amounts in many corners of our planet, are not well known to the public.

As Major Richard Keogh, U.S. Army, points out, not every small revolt, war of independence, or terrorist movement uses homemade firearms. It seems to depend, he notes, on the temperament, culture, mechanical inclination of the people, and their social-political circumstance. However, improvisation is fairly universal.

North Americans, of course, have been stereotyped as "good with their hands" since before the Industrial Revolution. This hemisphere of mechanics has turned out both the firearms and a sense of critical workmanship about the quality of homemade weapons.

There is a feeling that such weapons are *always* unsafe. One user, a former military man who now trains other nations' guerrilla and anti-guerrilla warriors, says, "Nonsense. I've fired all manner of improvised firearms from simple zip guns to homemade high-powered rifles for many years, and have never had worse than a bruised thumb." He adds, "Of course, there are many of these homemade weapons I have refused to fire, too."

The danger is in the misuse or misunderstanding of the properties and potentials of improvised modified weapons. For most, one or two shots is the rule, while the robust construction of others would rival the products of the big companies.

Or, as co-author Minnery writes, "The general disdain heaped upon improvised modified firearms is a bit unwarranted. I've sometimes found that innovations in their mechanisms represent improvements over production weapons."

He continues, noting that simplicity of operation and construction is usually a strong point in favor of these firearms, and that some of the production shortcuts taken in the "home" shop would result in considerable savings in labor, materials, and cost — if carried to the commercial factory or armory.

A law enforcement official, who should know better, told one of the authors that "homemade" copies of existing military firearms are usually safe to fire because "they are copied from tested designs, and some carry proof marks."

First, tolerances and materials in *most* copies come no closer to matching original factory designs than Podunk College's football players could masquerade as the National Football League Championship team. Proof marks are almost always just another part of the duplication, and do NOT indicate these firearms were ever fired for proof testing. As Granville Rideout writes in his excellently researched book THE CHICOM SERIES:

A word of caution to gun buffs and souvenir hunters about testing or firing any gun or device from the Asian theater. Because of inept manufacture, metal-stress, or deterioration of Chi-Com weapons and ammo, they should preferably not be fired at all. Or, do so exercising extreme care and only after consulting an arms expert.

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What Mr. Rideout wrote about ChiCom weapons may be safely said about all improvised and modified firearms.

Finally, and universally, the point of legality comes up in any discussion of firearms, particularly those produced or modified outside licensed and controlled facilities. Yet, in a pragmatic sense, this is a moot point.

That heavily restrictive gun laws do very little to deter criminal use of firearms is demonstrated simply by the enormous number of zip and other street guns in major U.S. cities like New York and Philadelphia — two places with extremely tough anti-gun laws. Many of these firearms are homemade or modified.

Philadelphia ad-man Karl Bopp notes with some sarcasm, "Well, the police have real guns, while these punks, hoods and terrorists make their own. The only unarmed ones are we poor citizens in the middle of this damn war."

Mr. Bopp's use of the word "war" is instructive, for it readily demonstrates that these firearms are not intended for simple, sporting use. At worst, they are used for murder, terror, and assassination. And, far to the other extreme, building or modifying firearms can simply satisfy a person's mechanical inclination. That, and this book, are what these improvisations and modifications are all about.

One third of the youth in Germany break down from overwork in our universities, another third break down from their own dissipation, and the other third rule our streets.

— Otto Bismark
Politician

On The Street

The late Thomas Dodd probably did more to immortalize the zip gun than Hollywood. In the '50s, Dodd told anxious Americans that their youth were poised with homemade guns, ready to zip upward on the escalator of violence.

"It began with bludgeons," the silvery-haired Senator preached, "and, it's now zip guns, with more lethal handguns — already easily available — next in line."

Zip guns are usually crudely fashioned devises which kill people as dead as mass produced firearms. The homemade models most often have a barrel made of water or gas pipe which is fastened in any number of ways to a block of wood, sometimes carved like the stock of an old-time singleshot pistol. The firing mechanisms range from rubber bands to springs. Conversely, some zip guns are fairly complicated, using sears, heavy bolts, and spring-fired triggers, just like "real" guns.

Zip guns are the original firearm of the ghetto, and these weapons have a soul all their own. They originated in a society where a knife put a punk a cut above his peers, while owning his own "piece" was a real sign of achievement.

Commenting on youths and their zip guns, Robert Kukla, author of the very fine volume GUN CONTROL, notes, "... there ... was going to be ... trouble regarding any recommendation designed to disarm the nasty little hellions who were making the streets of some of our large cities a non-man's land after night."

It was simply that to ban zip guns would involve banning rather innocent bits of raw equipment from sale to innocent folks, e.g. hardware supplies to housewives. The problem was not in the zip gun or its components, but in the person behind the trigger. And, where have we heard that one before?

Although they'd been known to generations of street kids and police, the zip gun came into Middle America's living room as a prop for Senator Thomas Dodd's anti-gun hearings titled "The Senate Judiciary Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency." It

was January of 1963, and nearly two years of research by Sen. Dodd's staff was on display, along with the props, which the wily Dod knew would serve as a focal point for the network tv cameramen out to get their ten seconds of highly visual film for the evening news.

Afterall, in the Spring of 1961, two Philadelphia youngsters were charged with the murder of a bakery delivery man. They used a zip gun made from a toy gun which had been heavily taped. Rubber bands supplied the power to the hammer which fired the .22 cartridge.

But, for many youngsters, the zip gun was simply part of a desire to build a mechanical "toy" that would be fired in a vacant lot or abandoned building a few times, then given or thrown away. For others, of course, the zip gun went from a macho thing to a headline maker when the targets became human, and often dressed in official blue.

In the middle '60s, a Southern police officer's life hovered between coming and going; the result of a small piece of scrap metal "junk" lodged near his heart. It had been blasted into his body from the bursting barrel of a toy gun which had been crudely converted to a muzzle loading, black powder street gun. The boy, who fired it in panic, lost one eye. Both the man and the boy recovered — one to return to work, the other to spend years in prison.

A very comprehensive article on zip guns appeared in the January-February 1963 issue of the now defunct POLICE magazine, written by Leslie L. Smith, then a special agent of the Florida Sheriff's Bureau in Tallahassee. His article was based on 25 years of service in the field, and literally covered the gamut of these homemade street guns from zap to zip.

He writes that these weapons account for far more flesh wounds than fatalities; a fact which must bother the doomsday predictors. Agent Smith describes one zip gun recovered in a small Florida coastal city as typical of the genre. The barrel was built of antenna tubing and pinned to a swivel which allowed it to tip down for loading. The breech block had a floating firing pin independent of the hammer, which had been taken from a cap pistol. The hammer pivoted on a bolt, and its striking force was supplied by thumbing the hammer back against the tension of a strong rubber band.

In another Smith-reported case, a rural sheriff recovered a tape covered gun made from the omnipresent antenna tubing. The striker was a clock pin, while the mainspring and hammer was a clock spring held against the tension of several rubber bands.

In a non criminal case, a physics student in a Florida university

produced a very competent looking and handling firearm in his own workshop, just for experimentation. He then turned it over to police. The basic receiver came from a pellet gun. A steel bar was inserted into thie receiver and bored to .44 calibre, with the breech recessed to seat the primer unit of a center-fire cartridge. The weapon was loaded by placing a primer in the breech end of the barrel, a quantity of black powder was poured down the barrel, and a .44 cast lead bullet firmly seated. It was fired by pulling the protruding bolt handle to the cock position, then pulling the trigger. The weapon performed well in tests.

As with this altered pellet gun, the basics of many street firearms are produced from existing mechanical structures.For example, even the sacred Daisy spring rifles from our youth aren't safe from persons monkeying around with death. According to an FBI report, West Coast law enforcement officials recovered a homemade .38 calibre rifle, which had been crudely fashioned from an old, springloaded "Red Ryder" BB gun. This odd weapon used the normal firing function of the BB gun to detonate a .38 wadcutter cartridge which was housed in a muzzle attachment fastened to the end of the BB gun. The lethal extension used fishing pole tubing as a barrel. When the BB was shot, it hit a nail at the end of its barrel, forcing it into the primer of the pistol shell mounted in its muzzle extension. The weapon fired repeatedly when tested, despite its dangerous imperfections and Rube Goldberg-type design.

In another case, a large pellet pistol was reinforced with solder and tape. The major part of the receiver was taken out, and replaced by a very heavy spring device attached to a knurled cocking knob. The trigger was attached by an enlarged version of a flat spring, and the barrel drilled to "more or less" fit a .22 cartridge. The cartridge rim rested on the barrel lip, but the casing itself was loose. When tested, the weapon fired three times, then burst badly, according to the 15 year old experimenter whose parents sweated over a doctor's ability to save a finger and thumb of their son's right hand. He did. Ironically, though, the fact that this young man cannot now and never will bend his trigger finger kept him from being drafted during the height of the Vietnam conscription.

A sheriff in a rural Iowa county recently confiscasted a zip gun machined from tractor parts. The 6 5/8 inch weapon fired a .25 calibre cartridge, using a spring-loaded bolt. The weapon fired easily when tested.

In another case, a similar weapon was turned in as contraband, and identified by the FBI as a zip gun made from tractor components.

However, a Canadian arms expert disagrees, saying this particular weapon is a modified flare firing device. He reports both the original item and the modification are quite common in his country.

Even the western farmers and ranchers aren't safe from having their weapons modified for shooting larger game. The famed Coyote Trap Gun, a hand device used to fire cyanide gas at coyotes and other western predators that sometimes prey on domestic stock, has been altered to fire a .30 cartridge at people. Several of these devices have turned up as far east as Ohio and Pennsylvania and have even been used during street battles.

As a rough guide, most street guns are smaller than the regular firearms issued from factories. There are two reasons for this: Often they are built upon toy gun frames, which are usually smaller than the real thing. Also, and perhaps more important, the street gun must always be a concealable firearm. The tiny .22 zip gun, smaller than a derringer, or the frail, thinline street pistol have been built that way simply to be hidden from casual search. Obviously, the same reasons are behind the design of the professionally disguised weapons, such as cane guns and lighter guns, so why not street weapons as well!

Ordnance specialists relate that cartridges fired in non-factory firearms are easily identified. Leslie Smith notes that burrs left on the barrel often scar cases and bullets, and the rough surfaces of homemade firing strikers leave highly characteristic markings. Also, the thumb of a zip gun firer is often bruised from use, and sometimes reveals powder burns and other residue.

To avoid forensic science, some shady gunmakers shifted to altering unreal guns to live models. One such item was the starter's pistol, usually advertised as a non-projectile firing device which was harmless. Although designed to be a non-gun, the basic design of this invention invited conversion, especially for the illegal user. The metamorphosis was amazingly simple, and still is.

In Chicago, a city policeman told us how he and his friend had made a "collection" of these conversion firearms merely from a six-month tour of their neighborhood. One told us, "These hoods can't buy real guns, so they go the other route and get a lookalike. Hell, even *I* could make some of thoes fakers into a real street gun."

Asked if these street conversions followed the model of semiautomatic fire, the policeman remarked, "Not that it matters, but, no. Most are single shot guns, sometimes or revolvers, built on the frame of the copy."

Another officer, from Los Angeles, said that the replica guns give

little trouble, as most are made from metal too soft and designs too loose to do much more than blow up in the user's face. However, as with other police, he cursed the use of hard steel in starter's pistols.

The starter pistol also interested Senator Dodd, as he showed how a number of these devices were easily altered into killing firearms. More than one witness testified that a particular Los Angeles mail order company regularly sold a starter pistol for $12.95, but also furnished a spare drilled and rifled pistol barrel as an "accessory." All the purchaser had to do was unscrew the solid barrel and replace it with the useable one — a bang-up job for any klutz with no special tools and a score to settle — cheaply. This was, of course, years ago. Conversely, thousands of other people buy starter pistols for legitimate uses.

Sadly, though, the public doesn't want to know about these thousands of people. The mass public wants to know only about the violent, deviant behavior of a very small minority — those who use firearms illegally. The mass media stand very ready to supply these stories to the sensation-hungry public. Yet, it is difficult to pin total blame on the media for meeting this sick, human need.

For example, New York police recovered a cheap starter's pistol which had been originally imported from West Germany, then altered in someone's apartment to fire live ammunition. The solid portion of the barrel was simply cut away and blank sheel chambers altered so they would accept .22 calibre short cartridges. The weapon was used in a non-lethal shooting during an inner city robbery. The New York newspapers and local stations bannered the story for two days. Yet, stories of safe legal uses of starter pistols during track and field events held that same week gathered only a tiny dribble of grey ink on a fraction of a column buried in the *TIMES* sports pages.

Commenting on zip guns, Lt. Joseph Bogan of the Liberty Borough (Pa) Police added, "These are usually pretty cheap items, and because of the poor materials, low tolerances and poor workmanship they often blow, up injuring the firer." He added, "They usually fire once, though, which is all it takes to kill another person."

Being very realistic, Lt. Bogan recognizes the lethal capabilities of the products at the other end of the homemade gunsmith scale — the various firearms made from water and gas pipes, plus the various fittings.

People have been building firearms and cannons from industrial pipe for years. In 999 out of a thousand cases. they are simply workshop toys to satisfy Man's ego for self-invention and desire to

create loud explosions. However, in a few cases, one man's pipedream turns into another's nightmare, as these crude, close-quarter weapons will kill as effectively as any regular gun.

One model's parts cost about $3.50, including almost effective silencer. The device we saw was about 20 inches long and weighed six pounds, which would also make it a hefty club should the firer miss his target.

Waterpipe guns are excellent examples of the futility of restrictive gun laws which keep expensive regular firearms out of the hands of honest citizens. On the other hand, these easily-produced weapons can be made by any simpleton who has enough brain power to purchase common plumbing equipment. Instruction manuals describing step-by-step building and use are freely available to those who read. In general, urban police consider these weapons as serious a threat as conventional firearms.

According to one classified government publication issued after the 1968 summer riots, several waterpipe shotguns were captured by police. Two were displayed in Detroit, and the parts' total price came to $2.92. There are as many sizes and variations of this basic weapon as there are lengths of pipe and people to design the guns.

A 12 gauge plumbing shotgun was confiscated early in 1974 by the Ontario, California, Police Department. According to Captain W. C. Simmons of that department, the weapon was made of various plumbing fittings, with a handgrip, plus a spring-loaded firing device. The weapon operated by unscrewing the fitting at the coupling and inserting a 12 gauge shell, then screwing back the fitting. To shoot, the taped, spring-loaded plunger at the rear is retracted. When this is released, it drives the firing pin into the primer, discharging the gun. In terms of safety, CPT. Simmons reports the weapon has been test fired several times without any damage to the piece or injury to the firer.

Yet, crude and hazardous weapons do turn up. In San Bernardino, police captured one of these devices which was invented by two juveniles. They had taken a 26-inch piece of pipe, capped the butt end, then drilled a small hole near the cap to accept a firecracker fuse. The weapon was crammed with kitchen matches, black powder and BB shot. It was propped on a clamp for rough aiming prior to firing.

"After several firings," an officer related, "weapons of this type usually blow up or explode at the breech end, often badly injuring the persons behind the weapon."

A similar device confiscated in the midwest blew up on the second shot in the police lab, injuring one technician slightly despite his

being behind a thin shield. Carelessly, he'd glanced out to see the "show," and caught pieces of pipe and scrap in his face when the gun exploded.

These very crude weapons do not hold much value on the snob or status market as "Souvenirs" of the war in the streets. As one university criminology major snorted when one of his teachers showed him a large, long, and real-to-shooting pipe gun used in a city fight, "Geez, that dumb thing's just some hunks of pipe. That's not a gun." However in one huge, smokey blast that "non-gun" sent three .36 calibre rough, dirty lead balls smashing simultaneously through a piece of pine board.

The very fact that these guns look like "dumb hunks of pipe." is to their obvious advantage. They can be easily ditched if need be. Or, the "gun" can be disassembled and carried away from the scene of the crime as plumber's equipment. The point is that a gun's not looking like a gun is sometimes in its favor.

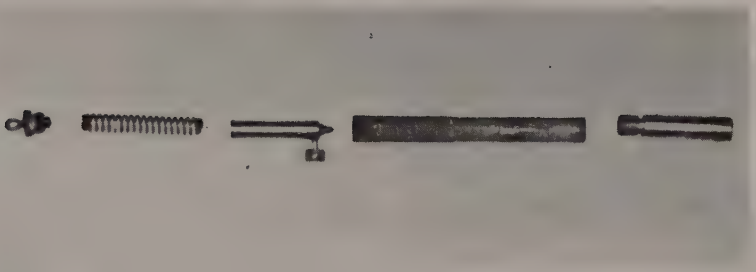
There have been many attempts to rid the nation's streets of these crude, deadly firearms. Attempts range from the suggested federal folly of buying back all guns — from zip to multi-thousand dollar sporting shotgun — for from $25 to $50 each. One major city tried this, when the Baltimore Police declared a period in August of 1974 when they would buy back, no questions asked, firearms for $50 each, plus pay a $100 bounty for each tip which led to confiscation of an illegal firearm. Within the first five days of the program, more than 3300 guns had been collected at a cost in excess of $168,000.

A couple of stories from this program are instructive. One young man told the press he was making zip guns in his basement, plus buying them from pals for $10 to $15 each. They remarked that he was turning a nice profit on the guns. Another young capitalist "imported" a number of street type weapons — real cheapies — into Baltimore from neaby Philadelphia, also turning a tidy profit.

Among the early weapons turned in were two zip guns, one of which was somewhat unique in that its barrel had been fashioned from one of those aluminum tubes designed to hold chalk that a teacher uses to write on a blackboard. The tube had been drilled to accept a .22 calibre catridge, according to Bryn Joyce, Baltimore police information officer.

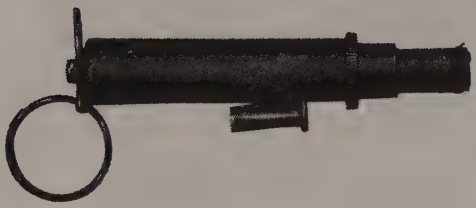
Whatever the reasons, causes, and effects, it is an admirable effort to get firearms off the street and away from persons who probably should not have them. At the very least, it is an attempt to go directly to the street criminal element without hassling the legal ownership of firearms. Of course, the Baltimore PD has a very professional ap-

proach to firearms, which is quite evident from the work of Joseph A. Reitz, the scholarly supervisor of the Department's Firearms Section. Mr. Reitz does more than simply collect, then destroy, confiscated guns. He studies them, knows them, and perhaps, as important, studies and knows their users.



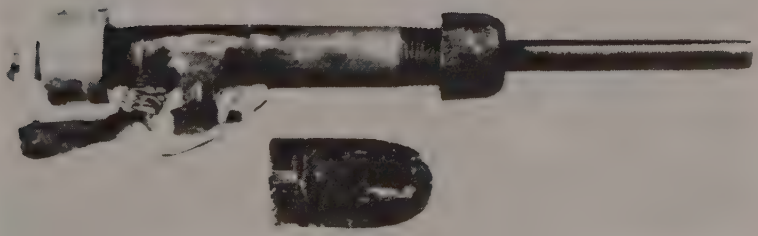
CREDIT: FBI

Disassembled zip gun made from flare projector.



CREDIT: Mississippi State Police

This .22 calibre zip gun was made from an army fuze lighter.

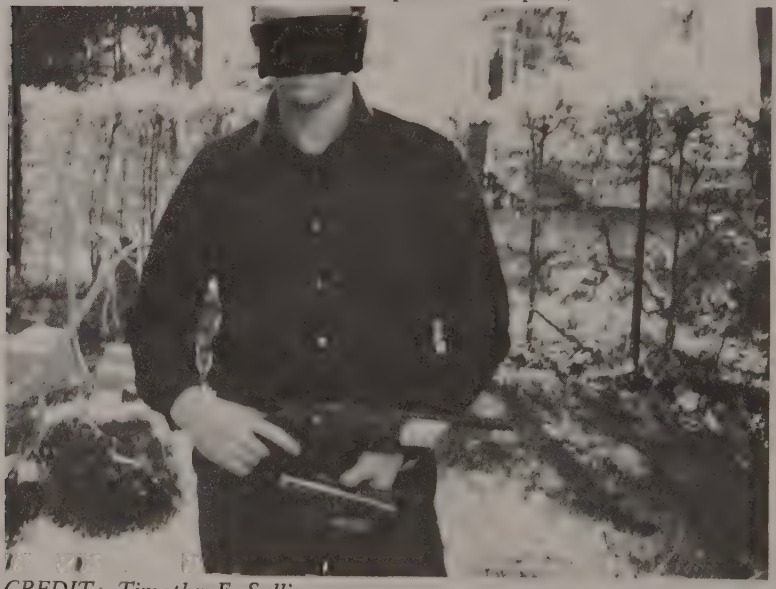


CREDIT: Leslie L. Smith

A pipe gun made in a Florida criminology class . . . made belivers out of academic skeptics.

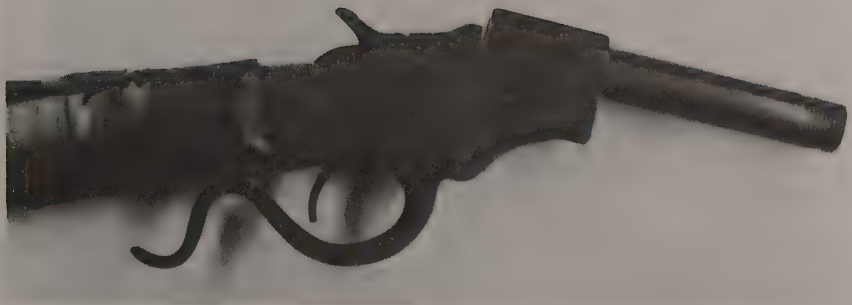
CREDIT: Christopher Scott Truby

Lt. Joseph Bogan, a Pennsylvania police officer, and J. David Truby display a sawed off cut down shotgun captured from a bank robber. The weapon is in the custody of Walter Klimek, chief of police, Glassport, Pa.



CREDIT: Timothy F. Sullivan

Two "do it yourself" firearms . . . a cutdown .22 rifle and a homemade .22 zipgun.



CREDIT: J. David Truby

A young gunsmith took an old Stevens rifle, rebarreled it with a piece of common pipe, cut down the stock, and produced a very crude, illegal, but deadly homemade pistol. Police recovered it following a street incident.

CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

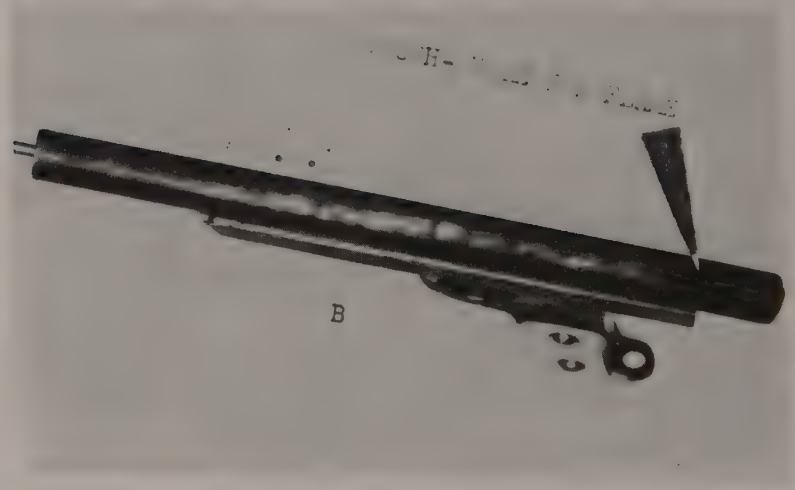
This zip gun was made from a cutdown rifle action mounted on a toy pistol frame.

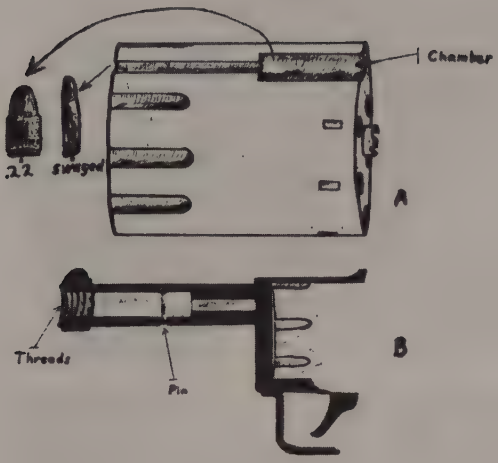
CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

A sawed-off .22 rifle action used by a juvenile gang member in a street rumble.

CREDIT: Research Council on Civil Disorders

A mammoth hand cannon captured by the Metro Toronto, Canada, police department.



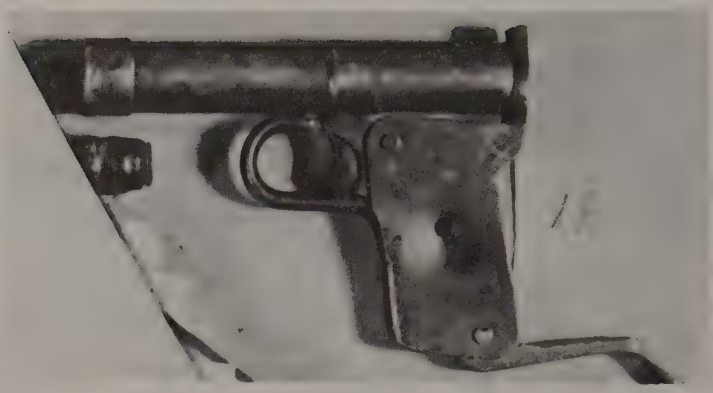


CREDIT: Bruce B. Koffler

Diagram of how a blank-cartridge firing Starter's Gun is sometimes converted to lethal status.

CREDIT: Boys Clubs of America

A collection of "street toys," deadly zip guns.



CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

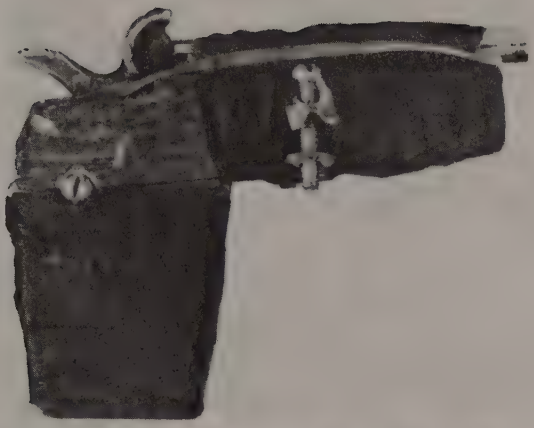
This BB-firing pistol was crafted in a basement workshop from scrap materials in a Baltimore area residence.

CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

A brutal weapon in a gang street fight — a hatchet with a zip gun attachment . . . . confiscated by the Balitmore PD.

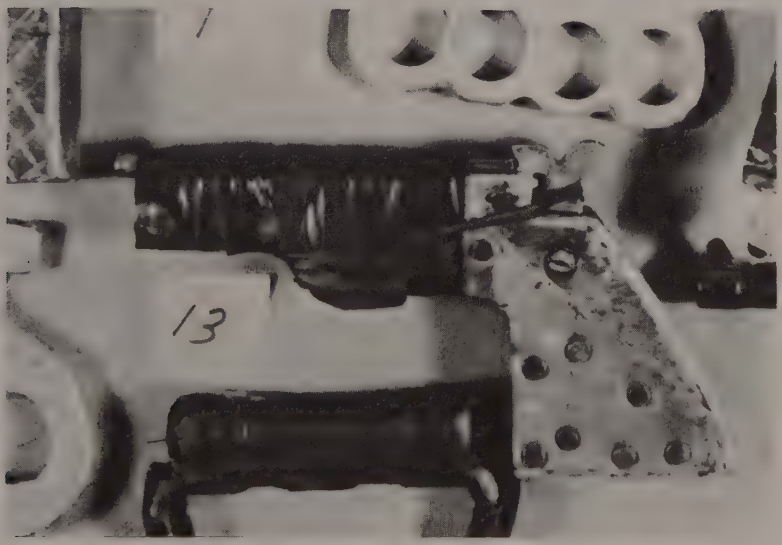
CREDIT: John A. Minnery

A disassembled, .12 gauge shotgun made entirely of pipe . . . the barrel is disconnected in this picture, and four shells are shown. The weapon was nicknamed the "Slam Bang Shotgun."



CREDIT: Leslie L. Smith

Genre example of the New York City zip gun of the 1940s.

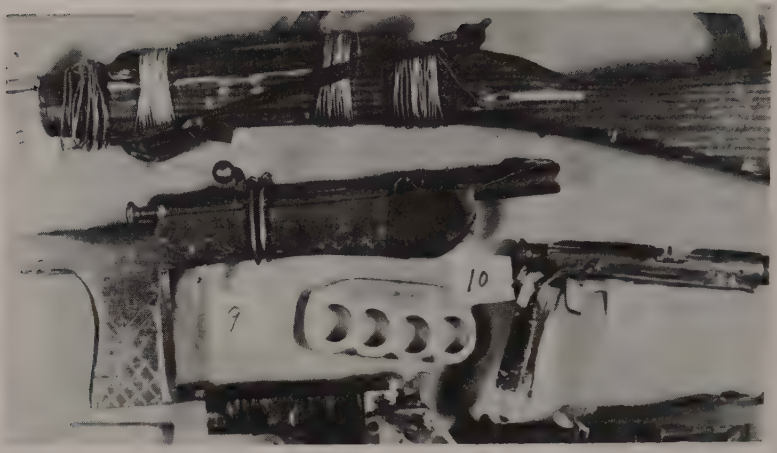


CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

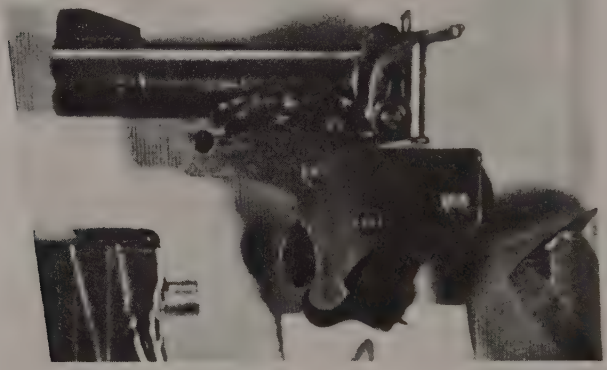
Another of the genre of zip gun.

CREDIT: Paul W. Wells

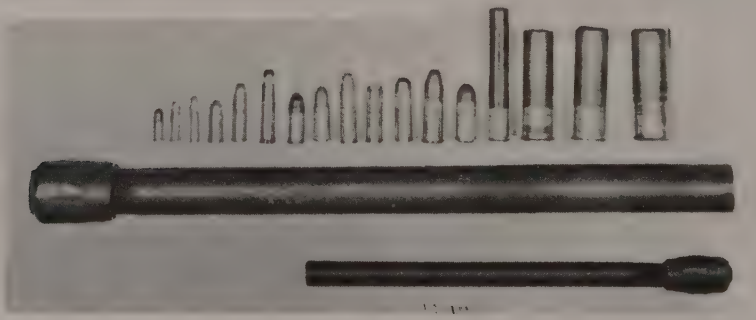
This very crude homemade 12 gauge shotgun was used in an armed robbery in Mississippi.



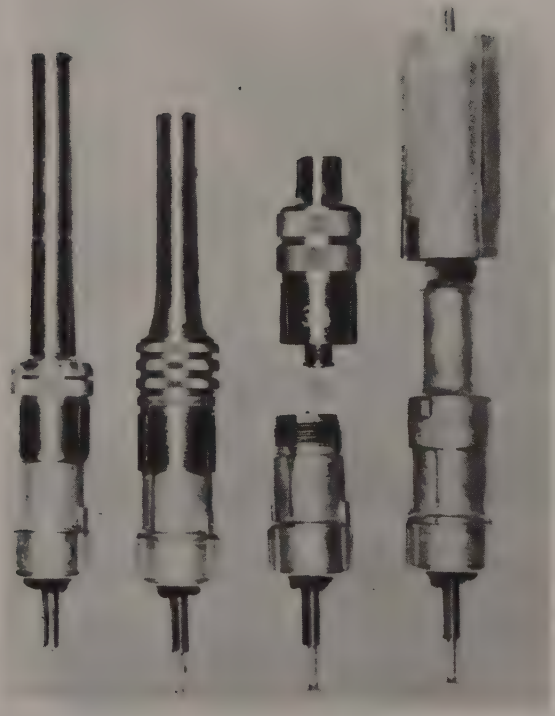
CREDIT: Joseph Reitz
Sawed off .22 rifle forms the basis of this street gun.



CREDIT: Joseph Reitz
Although inoperable, this cut-down .22 rifle action is still an illegal weapon.

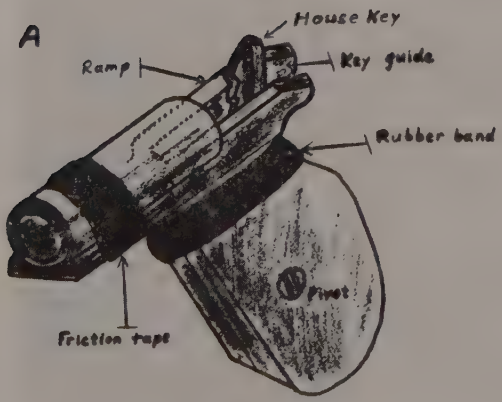


CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police
A composite picture showing two water/gas pipe firearms, the larger in 12 gauge, while the smaller is .38 calibre. The cartridges above represent the gauges and calibre of pipe guns confiscated earlier by the Pa. State Police.



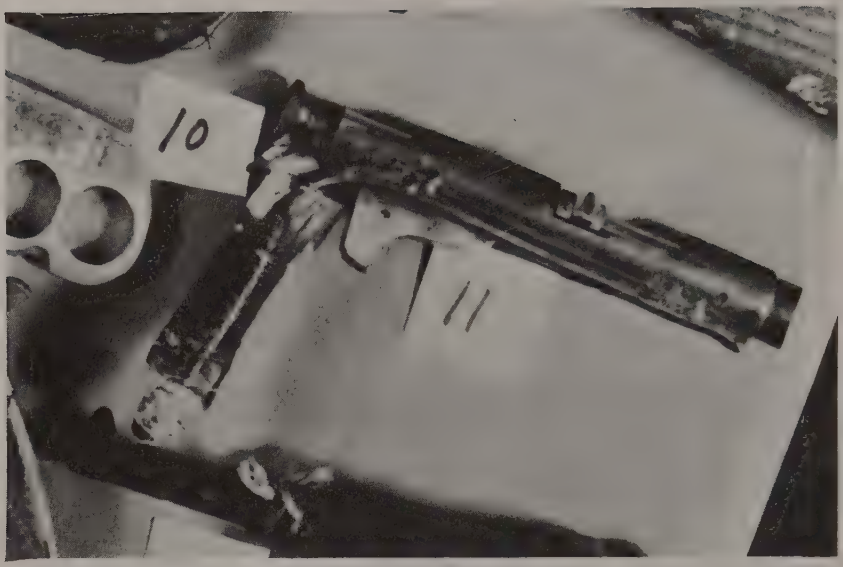
CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police

The original Coyote Trap gun is shown to the left, while the other three are conversions designed to fire a .38 Special ball cartridge.



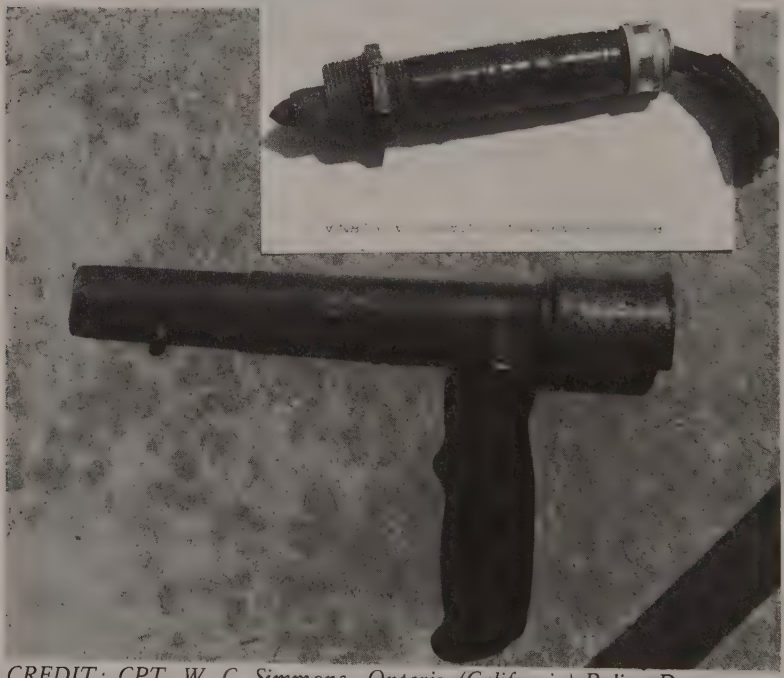
CREDIT: Bruce B. Koffler

Diagram of a common type zip gun, of a type produced in major cities in both Canada and the U.S.



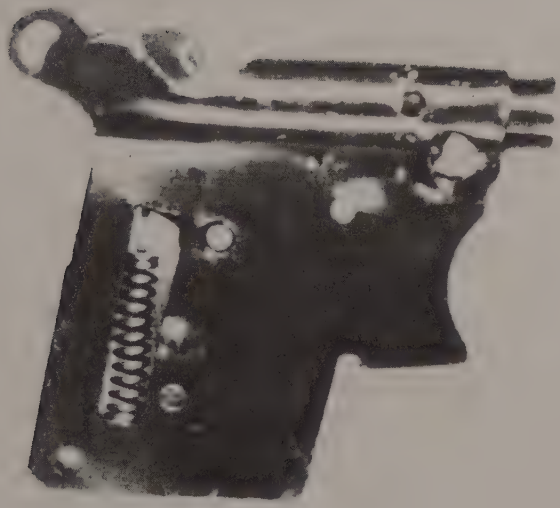
CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

A sawed-off rifle action was hooked to a crude handle to produce an equally crude, but effective, street gun.



CREDIT: CPT. W. C. Simmons, Ontario (California) Police Department

Disassembled 12 gauge shotgun made from pipe couplings, and fitting. The weapon is spring-fired.



CREDIT: Research Council on Civil Disorders

A homemade .22 zip gun, self-cocking self-ejecting. Made, used, and captured in Canada.

CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

Zip gun made from a toy, cap-gun pistol — one of the reasons New York, among other cities, bans this type of toy.

His is the kind of clothing worn by a man whose tailor is a blacksmith.

— Ambrose Bierce
Journalist

Do It Yourself

In the late 1950s, New York City police officers disarmed a prototype domestic terrorist who vowed he was a "soldier in the war against repressive society." The angry young man carried a small, single shot .22 pistol which he had managed to mount atop a rather large Barlow- style knife. The same type of weapon was captured by Pennsylvania State Police during a gang shakedown near Philadelphia a few years later. Both young men told police they had made the guns themselves, taking the actions of existing singleshot pistols and simply welding them to the large pocket knives. They said they couldn't afford to buy real guns on the black market and weren't able to buy them legally. So, they made their own. These were not crude zip guns, held together by tape, wire, and boyish hope, These were real, fulltime, business-like weapons turned out by do-it-yourself gunsmiths.

The enterprising craftsmen who make or modify guns come in two shades, generally — those who make the illegal weapons for a nasty purpose, or those who make the guns just for the hell of it. Advanced, legal gun designers do not figure in this discussion, as they are in a totally different category engaged in engineering research and development with serious, open purposes and goals in mind, e.g. Max Atchisson, John Foote, and Gordon Ingram.

Toward the end of the 1960s, U.S. law enforcement agencies began to really feel the vibes of violence shooting out from deadly active domestic terrorists. A specific basis for their radicology was militant belief in the power of the gun. Domestic terrorists saw power in the gun and had diligently set about to arm themselves as fully and as well as possible.

Most radical literature identifies gun control laws with the "Establishment," tying a neat bow around "the cabal of Congress, N.R.A., and the American firearms industry." The various gun lobbies and manufacturers are seen in concert with "the political power structure to keep guns in the hands of the powerful wealthy and out of the hands of the minorities, poor and lower class." Thus, the revolutionaries turn to theft, modification and improvisation.

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The basic tenent of their thinking is explained in a 1970 issue of *MAVERICK*, a counter-culture publication, which notes:

> *Many well meaning people think there is no need for anyone to defend himself physically against the police. But, you can bet most of those folks are Black, Brown, or have never been on a picket line when the bosses called in the cops.*

Naturally, the Reactionary Right has backlashed with backfire of their own/According to both their own accounts and press stories, terrorists have become the mirror image of the left, stockpiling guns and other weapons, plus firing volley after volley of rhetoric. Meanwhile, poor Middle America crouches terrified in the center of this battleground while two very similar groups blast at each other . . making society "safe" for freedom.

One of the author's acquaintances has suggested a weapon design that would be an ideal tool for the domestic terrorist who considers himself an urban guerilla in his war for freedom. Here's how he describes his dream gun:

> *It's a light, 4 or 5 pound, fully automatic rifle in .22 long rifle. It would be equiped with an optional silencer and would be fed from a 100 or so round drum, just like a miniature Lewis gun. Special cartridges would be loaded with cyanide-tipped bullets, and these would be tipped red. This could be made and sold for under $100. One person could easily handle the gun and five or six spare magazines . . . easily.*

The effect of such a weapon in the hands of a dedicated terrorist is staggering. But, one must not fault the man's thoughts as idiotic. Many serious people feel a violent revolution is quite possible, indeed, some feel inevitiable. Think about it. The cry used to be, "The Russians are coming!"

However, our various domestic racial and political terror groups who have both practiced and preached gunfire are no less a threat to your safety and ours than an invading alien army. The reality is that those who cannot win at the ballot box often switch to the bullet box.

Historically, the weapon of the domestic terrorist has been pretty much a matter of improvisation, modification, and "what's available." There are fewer improvisations of firearms than there are modifications of existing weapons.

These modified weapons include the cut-downs, silenced firearms, the full-auto conversions, or those altered in some other way. Usually this is done because the normal configuration of the gun is not as suited to the needs of the user as the new design. Usually, the three

major reasons for altering standard weapons are concealability, handiness, and effectiveness.

Actually, the simplier modifications require nothing more than saws, files, and the most elemental manual skill. The more exotic jobs, the full-auto conversions, the homemade integral silencers, etc., are usually the work of the back alley gunsmith or a highly skilled professional on the payroll of America's biggest business — Organized Crime.

Generally, when concealability is the main concern, a small pistol is used. However, there is usually another concern in a terrorist action, firepower. Obviously, this means other types of guns are preferable to the handgun, which is where modifications take place. For example cutting down an existing autoloading rifle or shotgun, or using a compact automatic weapon.

When heavier firepower is desired, two options avail themselves — shotguns or fully automatic weapons. Many people whose lives have depended upon shooting other people vote for the pump or autoloading shotgun. Yet, to make the Big Image impression, with its corollary human relations value, others cast for the automatic weapon. Nothing looks so cool and deadly as a truly automatic pistol or submachine gun. Just ask the tv and movie writers!

In the improvised mode, there are many full auto conversions sitting in the BATF archives, just as there are many more such weapons which are now part of public works projects — having been melted into scrap iron in the furnaces of various industries by scores of local and state police agencies.

Terrorists must steal or convert existing semiautomatic weapons to obtain a reliable submachine gun. Homemade models are very rare among domestic terrorists because it is easier to steal one or modify another gun into an automatic than to ''make'' one. Meanwhile, up in the corporate towers of illegality, Organized Crime is a bit more sophisticated about automatic weapons.

In addition to their own bootlegged automatics, the mobs have gunsmiths who can convert or build a very good submachine gun for illegal use. Both authors have seen very small .22 calibre submachine guns produced for profitable, but illegal, activities by well paid illegal gunsmiths for Big illegal people. Actually, Mob armourer used to be a glamorous position.

The premier of publicized weapon redesigners was George ''Baby Face'' Nelson (nee Lester Gillis), who was only 26 years old when two federal agents ventilated him with 17 gunshot wounds back in 1934. His best known improvisations included the creation of

minisubmachine guns from semiautomatic pistols. Two of these were found in March of 1934 during an FBI raid in St. Paul. The weapons were .45 M1911 pistols with the sears filed, extra long clips and a forward vertical grip from a Thompson attached to each.

The same basic device was honestly and legally patented two years later by Charles J. Michal, Jr., of Hinsdale, Illinois who was granted a patent on his "machine gun converter." It is essentially the same weapon as that designed by Nelson.

Thirty years later, no doubt excited by Baby Face Nelson's .45 M1911 conversion, an outfit known as Auto-Info advertised that for $2.00 they would send illustrated instructions showing "in detail, how the Colt 1911 .45 pistol or most other autos like it can be converted to FULL CONTROLLABLE AUTOMATIC operation by the addition of only one single part." They simply sent each customer a copy of the 1936 patent of Charles Michal, Jr., showing and describing his stocked, full-auto conversion of the Colt pistol. There is nothing illegal about this . . . as long as the conversion is not attempted.

One of the most popular conversions is making the M1 carbine into a fully automatic M2 carbine. From the middle '50s on, myriad "businessmen", who had access to military manuals, were selling "foolproof," "effective," "cheap," and "legal" ways to convert carbines to fully automatic weapons. Of course, the only legal way to do it is to contact BATF for proper registration procedure.

Many folks didn't bother with the legal details, but simply bought the mail order instructions and did the minor alterations. Some of these mailing lists somehow fell into Treasury Department hands, and agents made quiet visits to people whose names appeared on those lists, whether innocently or otherwise. The agents said they were "simply seeking information."

One of the more complete alteration game plans for the M1 carbine was offered in 1964 by Service Sales, which offered a completely illustrated sheet listing all parts needed, where to get them, for how much, and what to do with them after you had them. Using excerpts from technical manuals and some excellent close-up photography, this "how to do it" article made do-it-yourself machine gunning a snap, as long as you had a government surplus M1 carbine to start with. As before, do *NOT* convert or make anything without knowing your legal status with BATF.

Despite advertising to the contrary, newer, so-called conversion-proof designs such as the Apache and Eagle carbines have been successfully altered to fire fully automatic, according to do-it-yourselfers who have done so.

Of course, as one BATF official indicated, "If these domestic malcontents would stop to realize both the tactical and legal limitations automatic weapons place upon their mad plans, they might drop the auto guns for other, more effective armament. Of course, these big, automatic choppers make a loud roar and fire a lot of bullets," he added, "And, I guess that is what impresses these creatures."

On substitute for the full auto weapon is a device known as a "trigger exciter." This is an external device which mounts on the weapon to activate the trigger far faster than the human touch is capable. At least one state police unit has turned up an automatic pistol mounting an electric toothbrush mechanism acting as a trigger exciter. The entire 8-shot magazine can be fired in an explosive BLURP lasting about a second.

Some revolvers can also be made to fire more rapidly than the human hand, using such devices as trigger riffles, spoon hammers, or trigger depressors. Each is a mechanical device which causes the revolving weapon to fire and function in a ripping roar.

But, as we noted earlier, a pro will generally chose a shotgun for a "combat" situation like the urban battleground of the terrorist or professional criminal. For quickly blasting out killing chunks of lethal lead in controlled shot patterns, it's tough to beat a scattergun, no matter how hard Hollywood tires.

Although there are many types of shotguns for all types of shooting situations, the best known, certainly, is the sawed-off shotgun. All sizes of scatterguns are used for sawed off weapons, although the favorites are the 12 and 16 gauge doubles with tubes of 10 to 13 inches. However, both authors have seen doubles with only four or five inches of barrel showing and hardly any butt retained aft of the pistol grip.

Because the shotgun is a very common firearm it is easily assimilated into the arsenal of the domestic guerilla, where it blasts off as a brush sweeper, close-range assassination weapon, or, as an improvised grenade launcher.

In regular missions, shotguns are used much as they are shown on television shows and in motion pictures. There is little subtlety about a sawed-off shotgun. Generally, though, serious shooters prefer a longer barreled shotgun for all but very close action, or, where the gun must be concealed to the maximum. The characteristics of the shotgun speak very loudly to the efficacy of this judgement.

One legitimate experimenter who designed what he refers to as his "pump handle shotgun" is quite graphic about it. For example

describing his own modified shotgun, Kurt Saxon, a very literate author, says it is "a deadly, devasting weapon." No one will argue about his 12 gauge weapon known as the "Saxon Special." Basically, his is an ancient Winchester Model 12 pump gun of 1897 vintage with a pump handle epoxy-welded to the slide. The trigger can then be held back and the pump handle worked furiously to fire the gun as fast as that handle can be manipulated. Author Saxon described it lovingly, with his tongue poking firmly through his cheek:

> *Think of it! Eleven great billows of Single 0 buckshot in about four seconds. Clear a street in as short a time as it takes to swing the gun. Really piles 'em up. And noise? Lord, what noise!*

Kurt says that as far as he knows the only modern shotgun with an action which permits the trigger to be held back while the action fires the gun is the Ithaca Model 37.

While his gun is not illegal, law enforcement people worry about that deadly a weapon in the hands of someone else who doesn't care about the same laws which apply to the rest of us. Again, it is not the gun, but the person behind it who matters. Which brings up the next, ironic, point.

Sometimes, the weapons produced by criminals come back to hunt them. To offset shrinking weapons' budgets and to add useful but non-issue items to their arsenals, domestic police are using confiscated weapons such as submachine guns, sawed off shotguns, full-auto conversions.

In one case, the Military Police unit in Beaufort, South Carolina seized a very deadly sawed-off shotgun from a drug pusher. They registered the Stevens Model 325 Whipit gun with BATF, and now use it to add "muscle" to drug raids. One ordnance expert who has fired this weapon, CWO Thomas Swearengen, USMC, reports tersely, "The recoil is horrendous and the muzzle blast is well beyond the comfortable point." Of course, one must consider how it must feel to be on the receiving end of that muzzle!

In one mid-western city, local police have two M1 carbines which when confiscated, had been modified to full automatic by Right Wing militants. The illegal weapons were retained by the local department. In California, a number of local law enforcement agencies have modified weapons, including full-auto conversions, sawed-off shotguns, and at least one silenced sniper rifle, "courtesy" of a Mob hitman who won't be needing it for a few decades.

And, in Michigan, one police officer says his department has stashed a fully automatic .45 calibre M1911A1. It was converted by

a Viet Vet turned domestic terrorist who was arrested by them with his "toy" in the trunk of his car.

Law enforcement agencies also use their own improvisations, which sometimes end up as issue items. One planned modification, the Remington folding stock shotgun, was a prototype brainchild of CWO4 Thomas F. Swearengen, who came up with the basic design in 1969. He turned over his prototype idea to Robert Hillberg who then designed the Remington model. The original Swearengen model is mounted on a High Standard K-1200, making an effective, handy rig for a law enforcement combat shotgun.

Meanwhile, back on the other side of the law, the more serious among the illegal do-it-yourself gunsmiths are also getting into the esoteric weapons usually reserved for the boys in Langley. While we have discussed the use of magnatometers in detecting hidden weapons, it's also a fact that plastics and other non-ferrous materials are being used to produce firearms parts. For example, the military M72 rocket launcher uses a fibre tube and law enforcement officials already have seen examples of wooden, plastic, and even a cardboard gun barrel on homemade small arms. In fact, in one case, Arab hijackers were all armed with battery-initiated, plastic handguns similar to the Soviet *Troika* assassin's pistol. It's how they "beat" airport security.

According to one government security official, sophisticated terrorists already have the intelligence about, and perhaps the plans for, several highly classified espionage pistols using glass bullets, plastic construction, plus fine wire and wafer battery initiation devices.

Although not really a weapon itself,the use of improvised carriers is germane to our topic. Smuggling guns is an old sport, properly taught to most professional spies and assassins. Usually, though, it's the amateurs, the ones without "union" cards, who get caught. For example, Customs Officials in New York examined a suspiciously heavy transistor radio, and found its inner parts had been replaced with a .45 M1911A1 pistol by a U.S. serviceman trying only to smuggle his Vietnam sourvenir into the country.

Then, sometimes the passengers aren't the only loaded freight on aircraft. A security guard in a southern airport recovered a cardboard box containing a sawed-off 12 gauge shotgun. What makes this more chilling is that a 45 degree cut had been made into the side of the box with a razor blade — almost invisible to the naked eye. The firer could easily force his hand inside the cut in the box and turn the innocent looking parcel into a deadly killer in moments.

It wouldn't be fair to conclude this chapter with so few mentioned of the honest and innocent do-it-yourself gunmakers. If one counts all the simple guns made by most boys, there are far more of these fun experiments than there is deadly business going on.

For example, machine guns are generally regarded as the most efficient small arms killer of mankind yet invented. However, predating Richard Garling and Hiram Maxim, one inventor turned out a truly handmade, homemade percussion "machine gun" simply because he liked to tinker. To date, the inventor remains unknown, but experts have placed his work in the early 1850s. It's a crude weapon built without the benefit of any machine tools, yet it shows the design thoughts used in later firearms which were granted patents for the same ideas.

Most of these early self-gunsmiths in the United States were those tinkerers who decided to take an existing design, then add a personal touch to it. Thus, early firearm manufacturers saw their work imitated by all sorts of local gunsmiths, sometimes with the necessary shop tools and machines, but not the assembly lines. Gun collections contain many unmarked copies, fakes, and modifications of Colt, Smith & Wesson, and Remington handguns. In other cases, tinkerers obtained factory weapons and modified them with their own gimmicks, accessories, and both good and bad alterations.

For example, sometime around the turn of the century, an unknown American gunsmith threw together some of the basic concepts of the revolver and the newly designed semiautomatic pistols, coming up with an experimental weapon combining revolver and pistol. The recoil-operated "automatic" revolver is a six-shot, .45 ACP weapon with a 5½-inch barrel. The weapon was originally in the collection of Golden State Arms in California.

In 1913, Leonard Woods, not the famed U.S. Army General Officer, patented a tiny pistol built into the design of a pocket watch. He noted:

> *The object of my invention is to provide a pistol that can be carried in the best pocket like a watch, is as readily accessible and appears like a watch, whereby it may be presented and fired at a highwayman while apparently merely obeying his command to 'hand over your watch and be quick about it!'*

The device would no doubt appeal to the Law and Order Yourself crowd.

And, speaking of self-defense, often, shootings involve cases in which only one party may be left alive to testify. Adalbert Szalardi saw a way out of this dilemma in 1925, when he invented a camera gun which would both shoot a person and record the event on film. His handgun design placed a single shot pistol mechanism and barrel above a small camera, equipped with a clock device which would record the time of each shot on the same film showing the victim.

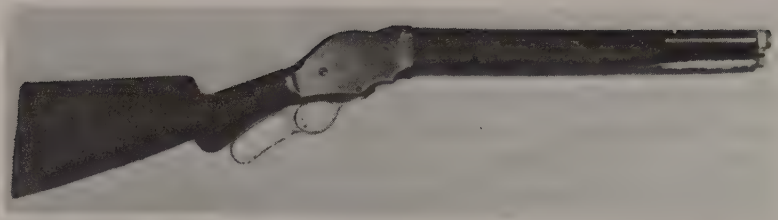
While it's not a small arm, one other invention begs mention simply for its Rube Goldberg touch. In June of 1862, two Waterloo, New York inventors, C. M. French and W. H. Fancher patented an "Ordnance Plow," which placed a gun barrel on a plow as a "means of defense in repelling surprises and skirmishing attacks on those engaged in peaceful avocation." The inventors instructed users to unhitch the team, use the share to anchor the piece, then load, and fire. It is not known if the inventors had beaten swords in mind as raw material to produce these special plows.

It's really a shame that more honest attention is not paid to the citizen-inventor who turns out prototypes in his basement shop. Of course, the BATF pays more attention to these chaps than they wish to, which, itself, is too bad. Although the BATF frowns at basement gunsmithing, and the results are often illegal, most of these chaps are totally innocent of any criminal intent. There really ought to be a pragmatic answer to this problem.

Finally, the other form of helping yourself to a firearm is also known in the trade as a "lunch pail special." Like the old joke in which the employee steals wheelbarrows at night, once in a great while, a dishonest employee will turn up in a firearms factory, and steal a firearm, piece by piece. There are of course, many classic tales of this in everyone's military career.

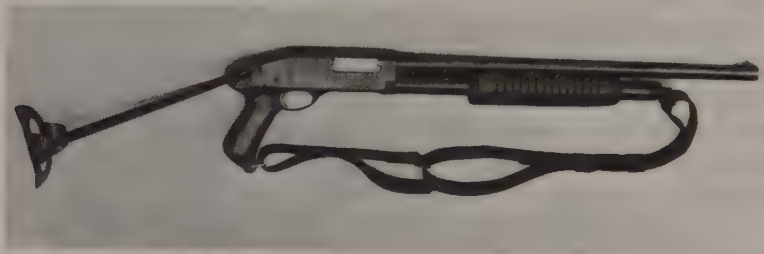
One such case turned up with Smith & Wesson, where an employee walked off, somehow, with enought spare parts to put together an unblued, S & W "Model" 39/52 or 52/39 — take your pick. Since the weapon never legally left the factory it still belongs, we guess, to Smith & Wesson. It is the authors' understanding that this "rare" item is now in a private collection, an "improvised" gun Model 52 or Model 39.

Somewhere, though, someone ought to have a public museum for all these do-it yourself firearms and gun oddities that have been produced by individual inventors. Displays would include electric pistols, pocket-carried submachine guns, backwards firing guns, plus the other patented and unpatented designs that can be classed as homemade improvisations and modifications.



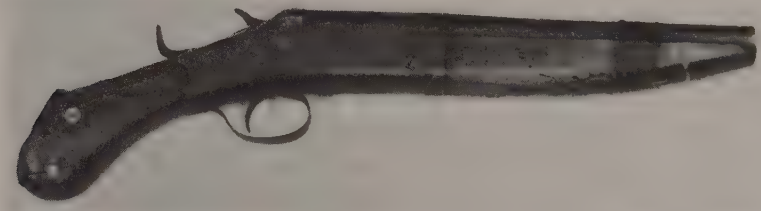
CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

This Winchester Model 1887 saddle gun is a 10 gauge shotgun. It was used in both the 19th and 20th centuries by several lawmen in Arizona and New Mexico. It is now in a private collection.



CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

Prototype of the Swearengen shotgun folding stock, first made and tested in 1969 by its designer, CW04 Tom Swearengen, USMC.

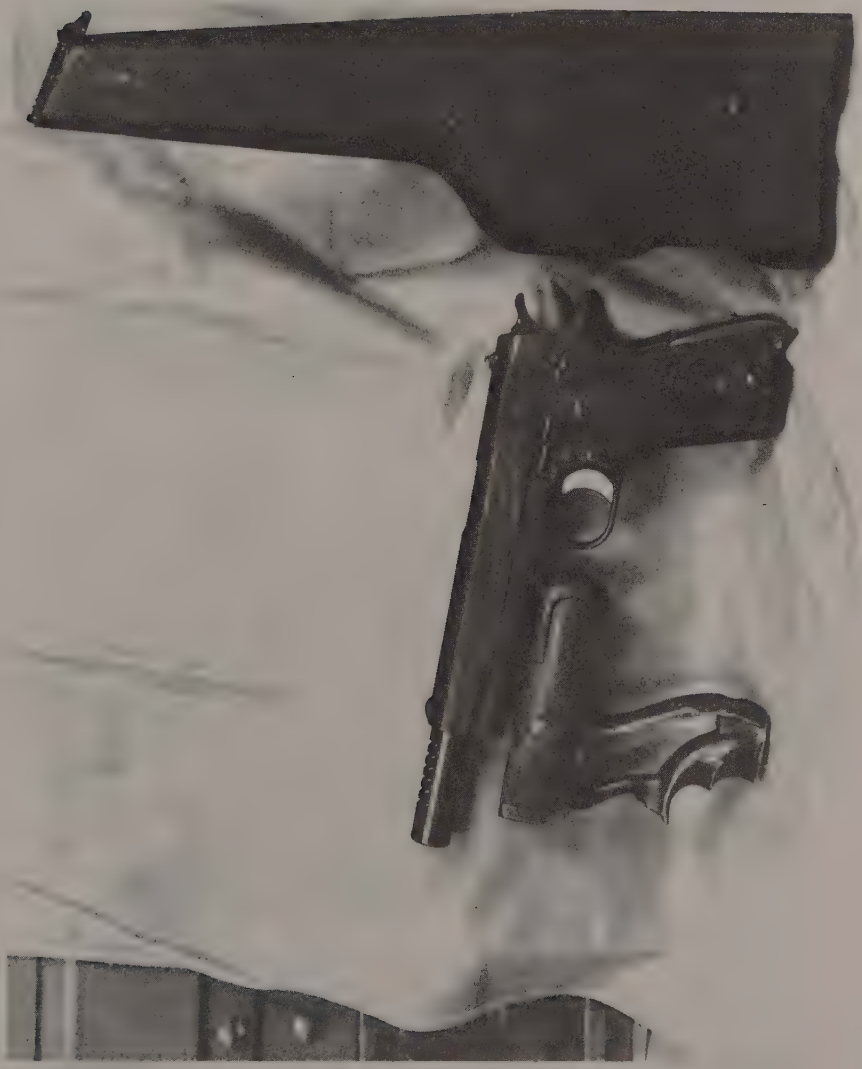


CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

This single barrel Whipit gun was originally made by Riverside Arms Co. This 12 gauge gun is an old one and has been in BATF custody for some time.

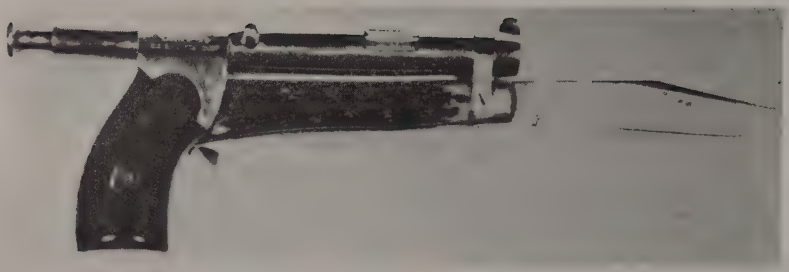
CREDIT: Officer Robert State, Eureka, California, PD

Kurt Saxon's home modified "Atlan Special" shotgun.



CREDIT: J. David Truby

The ATFD also has this murderous device in its collection — a fully automatic .45 military automatic.

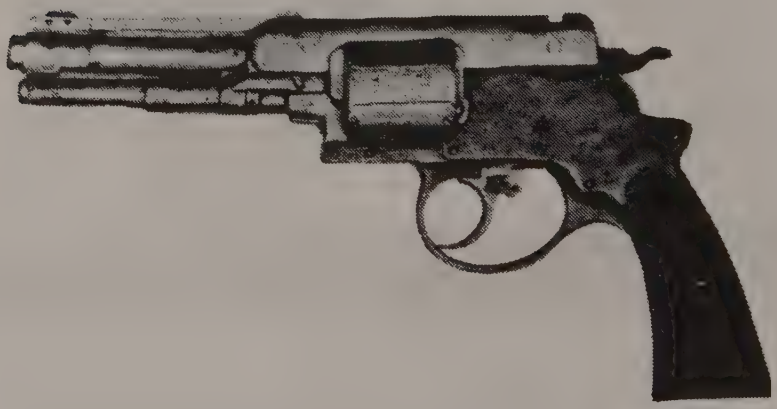


CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police

A hybrid between a pistol and a pocket knife — carefully welded in someone's shop turned out to be a double killer.

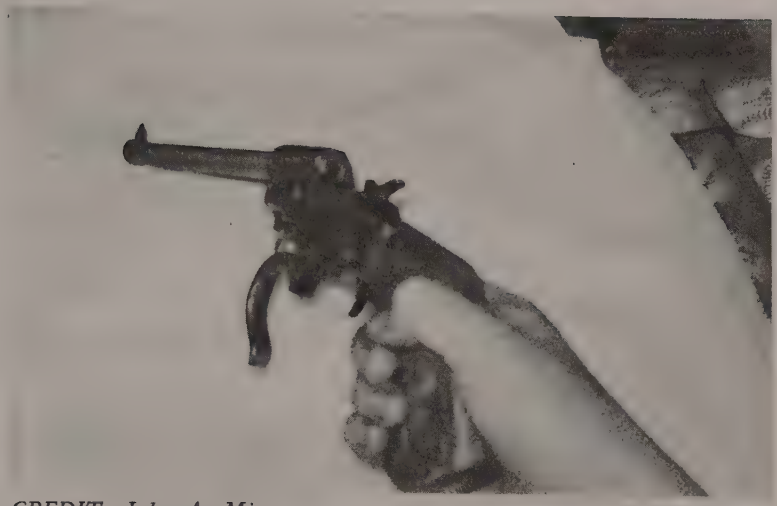
CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

A modified Japanese Type 99 rifle in standard 7.7mm, was cut to a 2-inch barrel for some non-issue activity.



CREDIT: Golden State Arms

An experiemental automatic revolver in .45 ACP.



CREDIT: John A. Minnery

The action opened on the cutdown Stevens .22 rifle converted to a pistol.

CREDIT: John A. Minnery

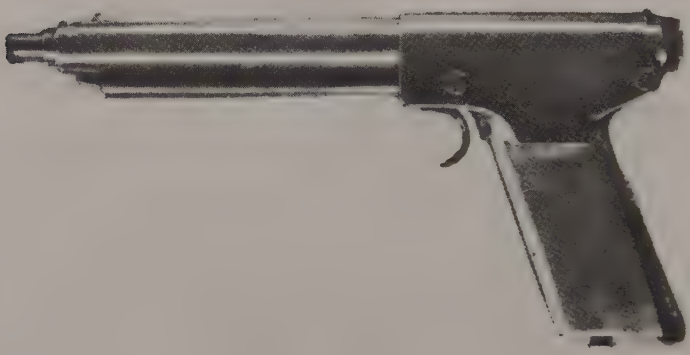
A real hand cannon, this cast bronze beauty is in .50 calibre, and fires from a touch hole, using a punk or cigarette.

CREDIT: Charles Edward Chapel

A early handmade firearm — the Hand Culverin, which is a "hand cannon."

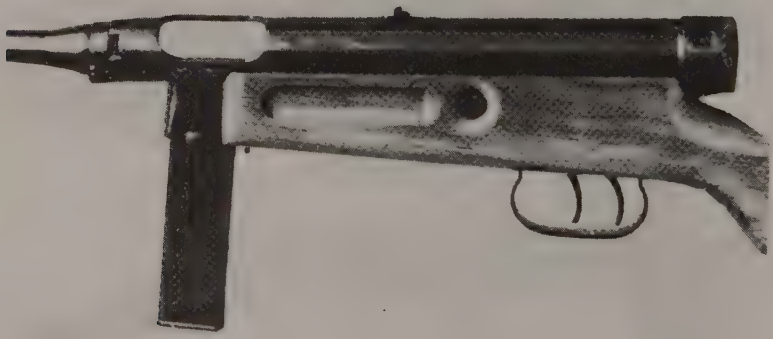
CREDIT: John Foote

An interesting handgun design by the innovative young designer John Foote.



CREDIT: Golden State Arms

A handmade prototype White-Merrill pistol of .38 calibre, produced around 1908.

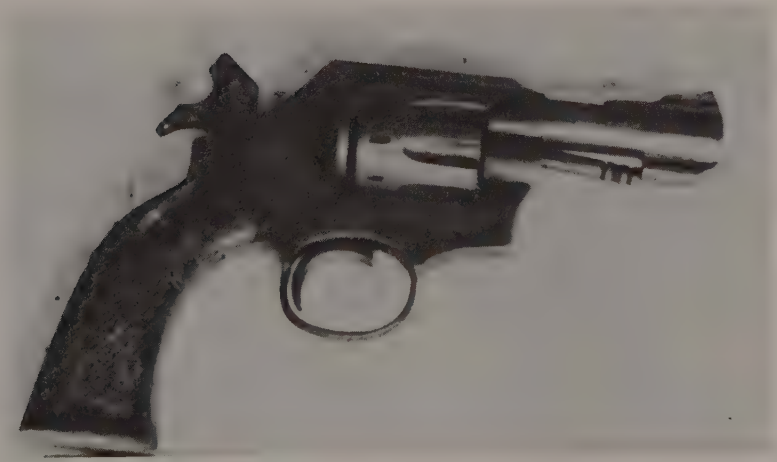


CREDIT: Mallory Engler

A modified Beretta Model 38 49, this weapon was recovered from a drug smuggler in West Germany. It was originally a military weapon sold by Beretta to West Germany, but was stolen in 1962. It turned up in this form in 1970.

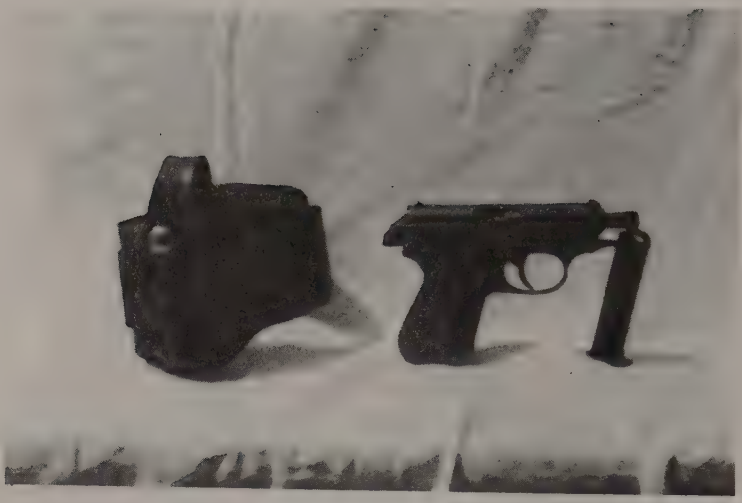
CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh

A ''lunch box'' special now owned by a private collector is either a 39/52 or 52/39 Smith & Wesson — your choice.



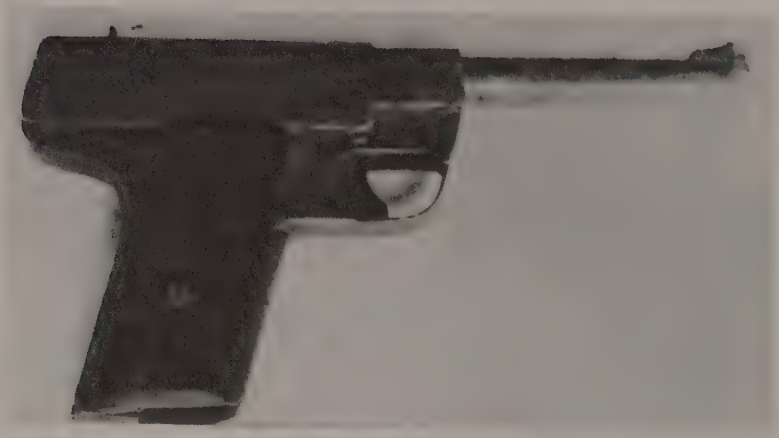
CREDIT: Lt. Col. D.C. Villanueva, A.F.P.

This 8-shot, home-designed revolver was built in local gun shops from a Smith & Wesson frame. It was sold illegally for prices ranging from $250 to $400 each.



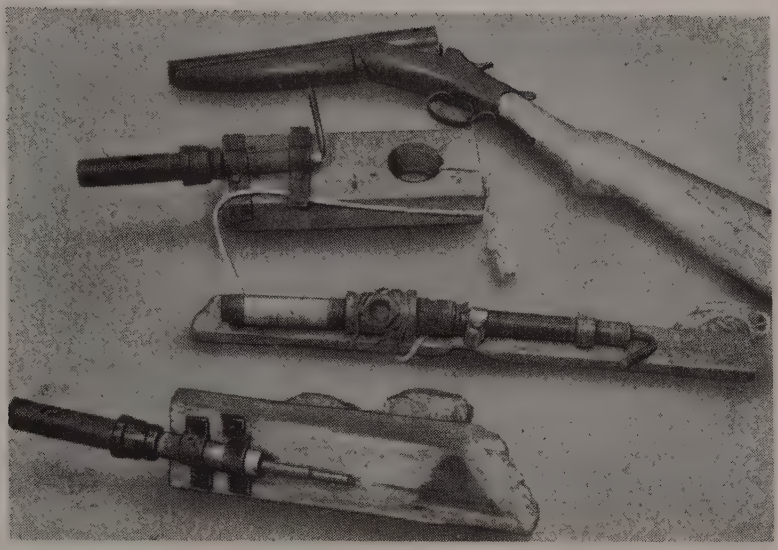
CREDIT: National Air Communications Corp.

Originally, this was a Japanese MGC non-firing replica of a PPK. A serious gunsmith converted it to fire live .22, as shown by the round in the chamber and the loaded magazine. It works, too, after the modifications and revisions.



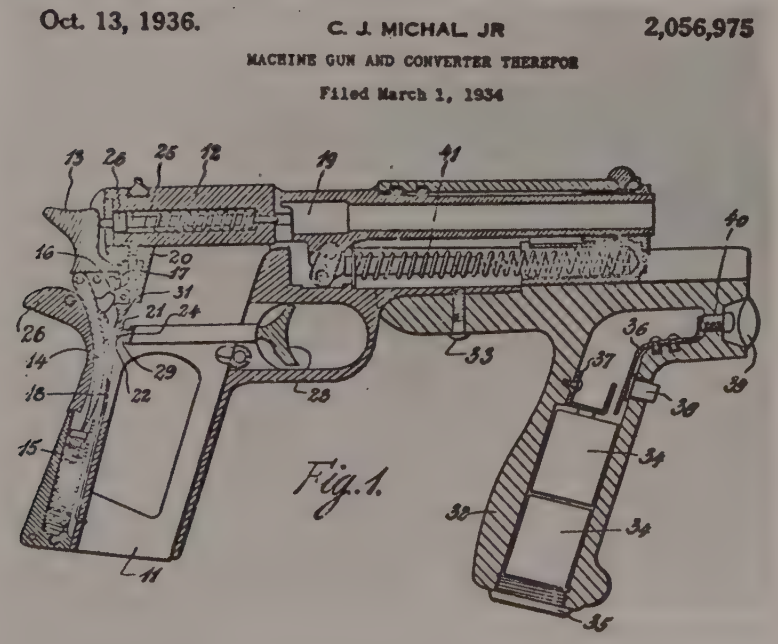
CREDIT: Maj. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos

This .45 ACP, pistol was produced by an illegal gunsmith in the Manilla underground, and was used by a criminal until he and it were captured.



CREDIT: Mississippi State Police

The top weapon is a sawed-off shotgun "modified" by a criminal who decided to make his own, too. The lower three guns are the result of his ingenuity and his shopping in hardware stores and the lumber yard.



CREDIT: U. S. Patent Office

The patent sketch of C.J. Michal's converter to make the M1911 pistol a fully automatic weapon. Note flashlight under slide.

CREDIT: J. David Truby

Ordnance consultant Donald G. Thomas holds the prototype Atchisson fully automatic shotgun in the presentation position.

The prison situation is often a school in which criminals learn not to make the mistakes that cause them to get caught.

— Joseph Bogan
Police Officer

Guns Behind Bars

In the middle '60s, three prisoners in Pittsburgh's Western State Penitentiary tried to bluff, then blast their way to freedom with handguns made in the prison. According to official reports, they spent weeks secretly manufacturing the pistols with pieces of pipe mounted in wooden handles, plus scrap springs, etc. The weapons were loaded with crushed match heads, then fired with a crude percussion cap made from another match head. The guns fired pieces of scrap metal and gravel, and were quite capable of doing serious damage at close range. Fortunately, the weapons were fired only at the guard towers, at far greater range than they would be effective.

Many penal institutions maintain small displays of these types of prisoner-made weapons. Such displays are more than simply an informative collection of the designs and the nature of raw materials which go into the guns of desperation. According to Murray Millar, curator of the Canadian Penitentiary Service Museum in Kingston, Ontario, and director of their Staff College, these exhibitions are a milieu in which to learn about the psychology behind the people who turn out prison guns.

"Often, these weapons are not for escape," Mr. Millar notes, "But, because of the fear — real or paranoid — of one's fellow prisoners."

Mr. Millar is correct. Usually, prison-made weapons are designed to settle old scores, to terrorize and bully other inmates for various reasons, or, on the other side, to protect against this in-prison terrorism.

Having a firearm problem among a prisoner population seems to be an impossible contradiction. Amid the security and the absolute fiat against firearms, a prison has to be society's ultimate gun control situation. Yet, the incongruity of guns existing so frequently in prisons is an absolute validity.

One Georgia prison guard, testifying in an assault trial involving three prisoners, told the judge, "Sometimes, sir, I think there are more guns gotten easier on the inside than out here in the other world."

How weapons get into prisoners' hands is a story in itself. But, basically, they are either smuggled in or produced inside the prison walls.

Sometimes, friends and relatives of prisoners come up with some half-baked ideas of slipping weapons into the institutions. On the West Coast, in 1969, a woman showed up at a California State prison with a large chocolate pie for her friend, an inmate. A guard checked the pastry. He dipped in his thumb and out came a tiny .22 starter's pistol converted to fire live ammunition, plus 35 rounds of .22 short cartridges.

Most officials consider smuggled ammunition much worse than a gun which is produced in the prison. One guard in the Michigan system wrote, "Once ammo contraband is inside here it's 20 times easier for a con to cook up a piece to fit the shells than to do it the other way."

One Canadian convict had a friend on the outside bring him a lovely painting to hang in his cell. Unimpressed, prison officials discovered several .22 cartridges secreted in hollowed out portions of the wooden frame. Later, in New York, an inmate had two .32 calibre cartridges hidden inside a religious statue. He made a pipe gun to fire them at his convict "lover," who was seriously wounded.

Most prisons do not use armed guards within the cellblocks for fear that inmates might overpower the officers and confiscate their weapons. Yet, despite these and other tough security measures, almost every form of contraband, from guns to cartridges to drugs seems to filter into this system with its locks on the outside. However, many convicts prefer to make their weapons themselves — on the inside — where there is much less risk of getting caught.

One prison guard explained the rationale which allows inmates to scrounge the materials needed to make guns, chuckling, "In the years I've worked as a correction officer, it was always with disguised admiration that I observed the Pack Rat Syndrome among many of my charges. They saved everything — paper, string, metal scraps, almost anything — in hopes it would be valuable for later use."

Since much of the prisoners' creative talent is turned to art and crafts, many guards turn a blind eye, according to this veteran officer, sometimes even helping obtain materials for the harmless hobbies of people with huge chunks of lifetime to pass away in incarcerated boredom.

"Other prisoners, though, would steal spoons, forks, or metal rods, intending a far more deadly form of manual therapy," he cautioned.

Prison guns can be as crude as a piece of pipe with a rough handle attached. Propellant can be made by scraping the compound from match heads, while the weapon could be loaded with small pieces of iron, glass or other scraps. They don't have to look as if they'd stepped off an armoury production line — as long as they work.

A few years ago in the southwest, a prisoner was assigned to reassemble and fix broken toys for a local charity group who then gave the repaired items to orphans. Spotting parts of a broken cap pistol, the crafty con copped the toy gun and secreted it in his cell. He gathered electrical tape, some rubber bands, nails, then somehow got his bundle into the workshop, and a few days later, he had his own zip gun.

"He needed cartridges, though," recalled a prison official, who added sadly, "We found out he traded his watch and $50 to get a couple of .25 calibre cartridges smuggled in from the outside by a part time summer guard."

The weapon was picked up in a shakedown, the con spilled the story, and both he and the ex-guard are now paying society some time for this escapade.

Another crude weapon was almost a cannon, as an Illinois prisoner used the hollow leg of a cot for his barrel. He fastened it into a large block of wood which looked only slightly like a shotgun stock. The weapon had a crude fuse hole, no trigger, and no sights. The barrel was filled with a half cup of glass, nail heads, and small pebbles from the walkways. A friend made gunpowder for him, for a price, of course, in the prison pharmacy.

"We first knew about it after he holed up in his cell and threatened to blow apart anyone who came near him," related former guard Tom Hansen of Chicago. "It was an awesome looking thing. He had a lighted cigarette to dump into the touch hole."

Finally, prison officials talked the man into giving up his weapon and his cause. Some days later, then this cellmade shotgun was test fired — by remote control, we might add — it blew apart, ripping the thin metal of the cot leg apart like a ripe bananna. But, as Illinois correction officer Fred Mason points out, "A lot of the con guns really show excellent workmanship, you know. Some of these men are real craftsmen, and turn out sophisticated pieces."

It is not unusual to see a few fully automatic firearms among the normal collection of pipe and zip guns in a prison display of weapons confiscated from inmates. Actually, as most ordnance men will tell you, it is probably easier for a good prison "gunsmith" to make a fully automatic weapon than it is for him to turn out a semi-

automatic or manually repeating rifle or shotgun. San Quentin prison's display includes several silencers, 3 auto pistols, and a submachine gun . . . all homemade.

It is ironic that the same machines a convict needs to learn a useful, legal trade in the prison shop — the lathe, punch press, welding equipment, and other machine shop devices — also give him the basics of firearms' construction. As an examination of captured weapons shows, some prison gunsmiths are as good as those working for the commercial companies.

Despite this workmanship, that can turn out a useful and reliable submachine gun, most prison-produced firearms are of the crudely improvised design. They fire whatever ammunition is available, fits the breech, or can be modified to fire from the weapon. In many cases, muzzle loaders firing a scattered variety of junk parts, nails and screw heads, for example, are used.

In May of 1974, a Michigan convict in for "Murder One" produced a firearm from pieces of pipe and steel scraps in the prison shop. This inmate also made his own powder and bullet for the gun — using homemade powder from smuggled chemicals and a headless wood screw for the projectile.

Describing the weapon, David G. Townshend, laboratory specialist for the Michigan State Police, noted it was crudely, but most effectively, produced by hand. It fired in simple fashion, using the flash hole principle, after the entire firearm had been assembled around the charge and projectile.

"We tested it after the weapon was picked up in a shakedown, and when fired, it drove the wood screw 'bullet' through a piece of 3 4-inch oak board, using his load and assembly," Mr. Townshend said, then added, "I don't think there is any doubt this was a lethal weapon."

How obscure can designs be? In 1969, officials in California's Folsom Prison recovered a handgun with a barrel made of paint-hardened toilet paper rolls, and a homemade mechanism of steel and aluminum springs. It help up for one shot, which promptly exploded the "gun" into fragments, injuring no one.

Often, though, the results are deadly. In 1966, authorities at San Quentin reported that a convict forged a gun of square pipe. The maker used pieces of cut curtain rod for his projectile, and kitchen match heads for propellant. He held the "gun" like a hand cannon of old, using a fuse, and blew away another con, the shot ramming him through the forehead with a two-ounce cube of brass, which had once been a curtain rod.

The most famous prison-produced "gun" was the non-functional, hand carved masterpiece turned out by John Dillinger. Yet, the honor of being the most truly masterful of the incarcerated gunsmiths goes to David Marshall Williams, known as "Carbine" Williams.

This man holds more than 50 patents, including those most basic to the design and operation of the M1 carbine, a military weapon still in active use all over the world. His other inventions include the famous "floating chamber," a unique device which allows cheap .22 cartridges to be fired in heavier calibre automatic weapons plus a number of additional designs used in commercial firearms.

Guns got Williams into prison, and they later got him out. But, not in the usual sense of a breakout. The fact is that Williams drew the designs for, built, and tested his first real firearms while he was a prisoner in a North Carolina penal institution . . . all with a very tough warden's permission, of course.

Marsh Williams never went to school beyond the 7th grade, so he was obviously ignorant of mechanics, stress pressures, plus the other physics and engineering of firearms' design. Yet as a prisoner, he did his planning sketches freehand on tablet paper in his cell, then scrounged his steel from the prison scrap area. He was allowed to use the prison smithy shop which did not have milling machines or a lathe. He took a year to build his first gun with hand tools. This story is an interesting one.

By age 10, young Williams had begun making pistols from wood, using hollow reeds for the barrels. He used light charges of black powder, fired with a matchhead primer. Later, after an underage fling in the Navy, he got married, and turned to an honorable profession for his region and time — moonshining.

He said, "It was a great demand — great," adding with a snort, "We would brew up some 'old stumphole' for $2, and sometimes sell it for $20."

The, in 1921, law officers raided the still, shots were exchanged and one deputy sheriff was killed. As "Still Master," Williams was charged with the killing, despite the fact that no one knew who fired the filling shots. He always denied it, and, interestingly, most folks believed him. Despite this, he was destined for prison.

At age 20, Marsh Williams accepted his family lawyer's plea bargaining for 30 years of hard labor, instead of a life sentence. One of the author's had a family friend who was a law officer with experience in North Carolina prisons of the '20s, and in his brighter recollections described conditions as "brutal and inhuman." One former inmate later wrote of the prison to which Williams was sent,

"You could get solitary for a week just for tying your shoelace without asking a guard's permission."

For some reason, the spunky Williams was sent to a camp for incorrigibles in 1923, his second year in prison. His warden was Capt. Tom Peoples, a martinet with a reputation for being a "real bastard." Yet, the man apparently respected honest ability, because he allowed Williams to have pencils and paper, and gave his permission for the prisoner to draw his designs for firearms.

Soon, Williams became a trusty and traded his striped suit for work clothes and privileges to use the prison workshop and tools. After he got the okay to build his gun, he also won permission from Capt. Peoples to test it, with ammunition issued by the guards. It was a mark of extreme confidence between prisoner and warden.

Family lawyers helped prisoner Marsh Williams get the publicity which formulated sympathy to release this young man who was doing so well in honest work — designing very workable military and sporting guns. In 1929, he was released, went home and set up his work shop with all the modern tools he didn't have in prison. There, he produced his plans, built prototypes, and filed the patents on his unique ideas — the designs which had waited so long to get free of prison walls.

Marsh Williams' moment of national glory came in the early '50s, when SATURDAY EVENING POST did one of its "down home" golden stories on him, and Hollywood selected All-American Boy Jimmy Stewart to play the lead in the film biography, "Carbine Williams." According to press releases, the actual Williams prison rifle was used in the film.

Unhappily, for the goodness of one David Williams, there are dozens of cons like Stanley Hoss, Charles Manson, Fred Gomez Carasco, et. al.

CREDIT: David Townshend, Michigan State Police

Disassembled prison-made weapon confiscated from a man serving a first degree murder sentence in Michigan.

CREDIT: David Townshend, Michigan State Police

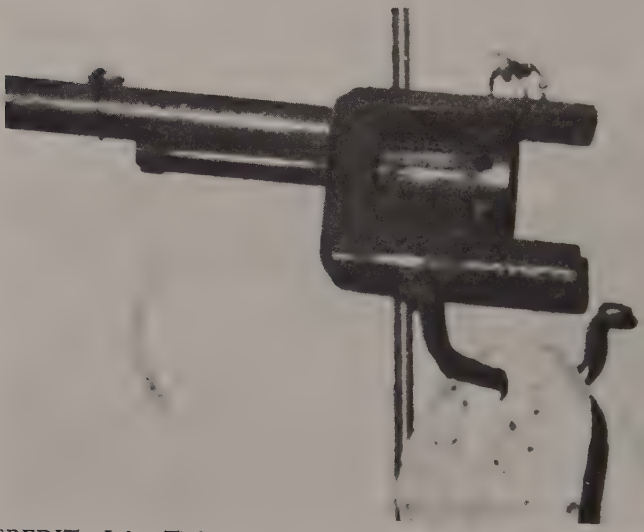
The assembled homemade cartridge with a wood screw bullet, built by a convict in Michigan.

CREDIT: David Townshend, Michigan State Police

Wood screw "bullet" from convict's homemade gun easily penetrated a tough oak plank.

CREDIT: John Tighe

This level release .22 zip gun, made in prison, is similar to the Soviet "'Squid'' assassination weapon.



CREDIT: John Tighe

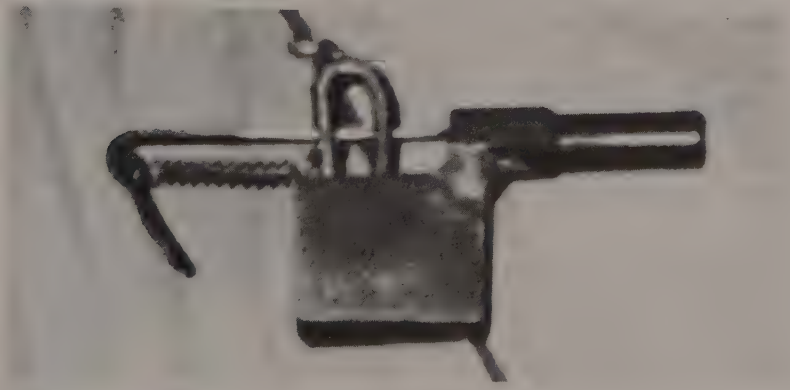
Prison-made revolver, captured by guards before it could be completed.

CREDIT: Mississippi State Penitentiary

This tiny pistol was made inside prison walls . . . it's deadly, too.

CREDIT: North Carolina State Historical Museum

Marshall "Carbine" Williams and his famous made-in-prison rifle.



CREDIT: John Tighe

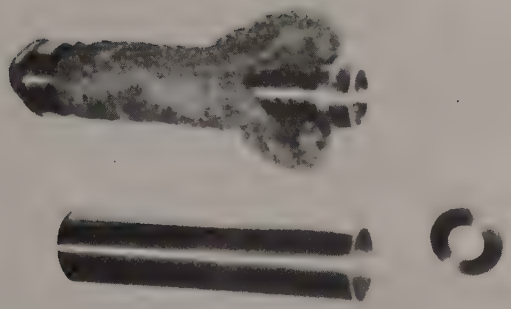
Prison-produced zip gun.

CREDIT: John Tighe

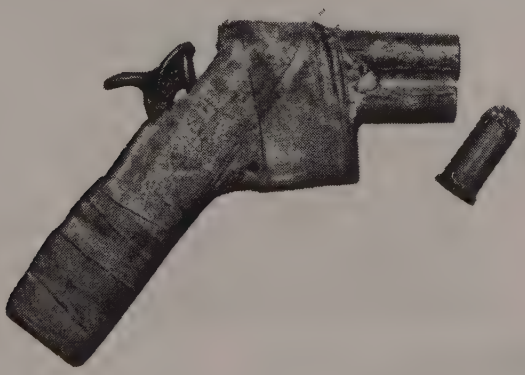
This 12 gauge weapon was made in a prison workshop. The pencil points to the striker bolt in it's "L" slot. Action is similar to that of a pen gun.

CREDIT: Paul W. Wells

This combination .38 and .40 calibre zip gun was used and fired in an attempted prison break in Mississippi.

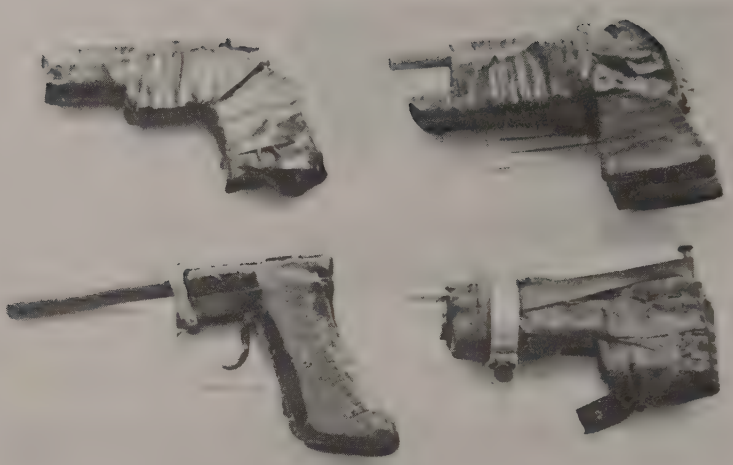


CREDIT: John A. Minnery
A prison-made silencer showing the inmate's skill and ingenuity in manufacture.



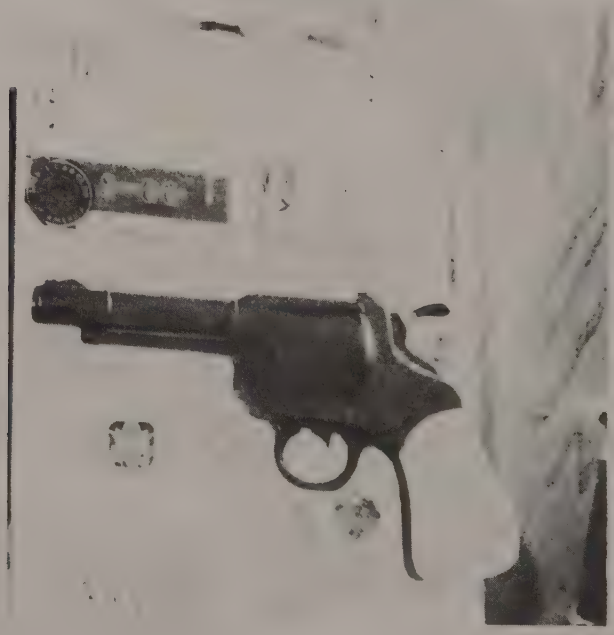
CREDIT: Mississippi State Penitentiary
Zip gun produced by an inmate of the Mississippi State Penitentiary.

CREDIT: Clair F. Rees.
Prison-made, break-top type, .410 gauge shotgun was fired by pulling back on spring and releasing.



CREDIT: Paul W. Wells

A cell shakedown in one of Mississippi's prisons turned up these four firearms — all workable, all deadly, all produced in the prison.



CREDIT: John Tighe

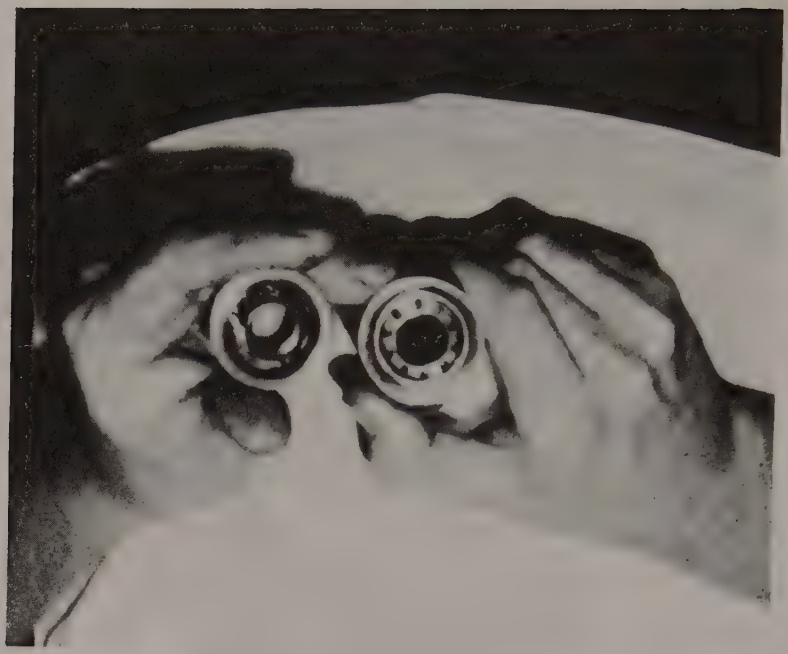
A Canadian prison official displays an escape kit gathered by a convict. It includes a "ruse" pistol.

CREDIT: M. E. Millar

Don Walsh, instructor at the Correctional Staff College Museum in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, examines the 12 gauge pipe gun made by an inmate in the Collins Bay prison for a breakout attempt.

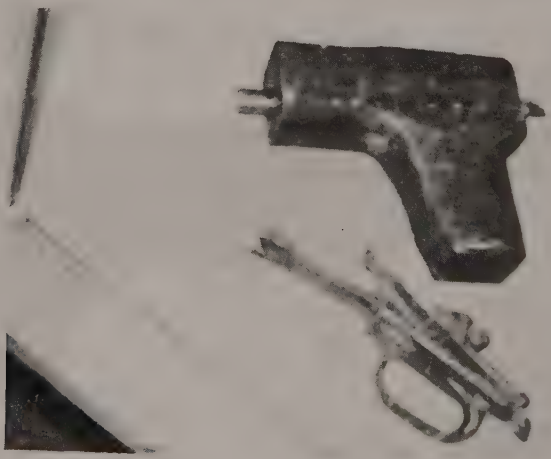
CREDIT: Mississippi State Police

This homemade .20 gauge shotgun was used in a Mississippi prison break in which 3 cons were killed and a guard wounded. It's made from a bed post, and other odds and ends of metal and wood.



CREDIT: John Tighe

This relatively smooth silencer was produced in a prison shop.



CREDIT: John A. Minnery

Top: large wooden block zip gun; Bottom: prison-made trigger and sear mechanism. Both made by Canadian inmates.

Life is the actions of men in pursuit of their ends.

— Karl Marx
Philosopher

Who Knows Where Gunfire Lurks

According to Lewis Winant, writing in his excellent classic, FIREARMS CURIOSA, "Inventors have overlooked few objects that could be used to conceal a firearm." Then, getting into the mode, perhaps, of the improvised modified firearm, he adds, ". . . these inventors have realized that the more innocent and unexpected the cover for the gun the better the chance for surprise attack."

That fairly well describes the basic idea behind improvising firearms in some disguised form. Obviously, the major user of this sort of firearm would be espionage agents or terrorists, both of which are covered in other sections of this book.

So, while those chapters deal with users, this section will cover the tools rather than the mechanics.

These disguised firearms have been around almost as long as the straight models from which they came. For example, in Spain, several inventors successfully designed small pistols within the form of large keys for the large locks common to the castles of the day. According to Winant, the use of a key designed to hide a pistol had been one of the history's most recognized methods, yet, used very rarely, for some reason.

Another early sneak weapon is held by H.P. White Laboratories in their Museum. It's the Frankenau Pocketbook Gun, a 5 mm German pinfire gun which carries five tiny, but lethal, cartridges in its cylinder. The weapon, which is housed in an innocent-looking billfold, will fire with the pocketbook open or closed.

And, at least one powerful European cleric of the 17th century had a pistol disguised within his prayer book. A lever disguised as a bookmark fired the bulky book gun.

A Philadelphia shopkeeper in the early 1800s kept a loaded "ledger" book near his counter. The biggest entry in this book was a spring-fired percussion pistol in .36 calibre.

Moving on 130 years, District of Columbia police confiscated what appeared to be a butane lighter, but was really a .25 calibre firearm "tube." The device discharged by a spring device tripped by a roller "trigger," firing a single .25 ACP cartridge.

Back in the 1930s, Cleveland police reported finding a large Kodak bellows camera in a bus station locker. Because the camera was very

heavy and wouldn't fold up, they opened it, and found a .32 calibre pistol inverted inside the ''box'' of the camera. It was aimed to fire through the lens, and tests showed the camera's viewfinder had roughly been sighted in with the pistol. The owner was never located, nor is it known if this disguised pistol was used to make a hit.

There are many designs of pen and pencil-disguised pistols. In general, most are usually a bit larger and significantly fatter than the usual mechanical writing instrument one would carry clippped to a shirt pocket. Most appear more like metallic felt-tipped marking pens than standard pen or pencil types.

However, several of these seen in private collections are very cleverly disguised, and would probably pass visual inspection as being a common pen or pencil, according to one police ordnance officer commenting on various of these firearms.

Perhaps borrowing the design of the OSS T2 and its successor, the MAC Stinger, a man in a southwestern state used a hand size fire extinguisher device to build a firearm. Confiscated by police, the .38 calibre single shot weapon was called ''potentially very very deadly at close range.''

The single cartridge was inserted into the nozzle of the red device. The nozzle was then screwed into the body. The weapon was cocked by pulling back on the handle, the same as one does to activate the conventional extinguisher. The weapon was fired by pushing a small button extending from the body of the weapon. One detective noted, ''This baby could be pushed right into the victim, fired, and probably the only two persons who would know a shot was fired would be the victim and the shooter.''

Two more civilian imitators of the ''stinger'' type weapon were arrested in Detroit in May of 1974. Charges were filed against two suburban men who had produced about 1500 penguns. The weapons were seized by local BATF officers, who described the device as about the size of a ballpoint pen and firing a single .22 calibre cartridge. The two men were selling the weapons for $8 each, but had no licenses for the manufacture, sale and possession of such weapons.

Then, there's the story of the Midwestern policeman who really showed that the pen can be mightier than the sword, especially when it's been converted into a '32 calibre ''stinger'' type weapon. Searching a suspect, the officer found what he thought was a rather heavy mechanical pencil. He found that the writing device also doubled as a lethal instrument.

A pistol cartridge was encased between two knurled steel caps which became a ''barrel.'' This barrell was screwed into the pencil

shaft which contained a spring-operated firing pin. The weapon was fired by pulling back and releasing the small trigger knob which protruded at the bottom of the pencil.

"This weapon will fire, but it's dangerous because repeated use will weaken the joints and the parts themselves," the arresting officer stated, then, added, "We also ascertained that the pencil part works, too. I guess it's less dangerous."

Apparently, he didn't know some old time journalists. One, a real rip-snorter, used to work for the old NEW YORK HERALD. Wanting to impress his police beat buddies, he traded a gunsmith friend two World Series tickets for a .22 firearm disguised as a mechanical pencil. Everything worked fine. The weapon cocked much like the Stinger-type and a dozen other pen pencil guns, and fired by means of a button-tirgger. Also, as usual, the safety features were not worthy of the use of that word.

Our friend carried his pencil gun in his vest pocket. And, one hot summer day, the year after he got it, he had been impressing some new copy boys with the device. Forgetting to uncock it, he clipped it to the pocket of his vest which was tossed carelessly over his chair. Leaving the office an hour later for a late afternoon beer in the Manhattan heat, our hero threw his vest smartly over his shoulder, the gun button hit his shoulder blade, and the weapon fired — straight down . . . giving him a nasty .22 calibre slap in the right cheek.

More seriously, a shipment of penguns turned up in a police investigation in the Toronto area in July of 1974, as Police Superintendent William Teggart told newsmen that the "smoothly produced and finished guns" were part of a weapons shipment seized in a raid on organized crime elements in that area of Ontario.

"We got word that these particular guns are favorites of extortionists who use them to plunk their victims in the leg," Supt. Teggart said. "They can simply throw the guns away after using them."

The small guns resembled the usual type of firearms of this sort, according to Supt. Teggart, and appeared to have come from some workshop, as they did not appear to be "crude, homemade conversions."

In addition to pistols disguised as pens, combinations of pistol and knife are common in collections and firearms literature. For our purposes, we will not consider simply combination weapons, but only those in which an attempt is made, however poorly, to hide the pistol portion.

The gun knife combination is not a new idea, though, as an R.W. Andrews patented just such a device in July 1837. However, the best known of this species is that of the Unwin & Rogers Company. First made as muzzleloading percussion pieces,their knife guns were later modernized with breech loading and rimfire cartridges. They made both single and double barrel models of the knife firearm combination, although the double barrel models are rare collectors' items today.

Another combination popular with our ancestors of a hundred or so years ago were little penknife guns, having one or two blades and a tiny mechanism for firing a .22 short cartridge. Some of the better ones were patented around the time of the First World War, and were openly advertised in those more innocent days before Street Crime became such a political rationale. Some of the cleverer designs were very tough to spot as being anything but a common pocket knife. For example, POPULAR SCIENCE MONTHLY carried advertisements for these devices in 1922. A larger model was known as "The Huntsman," while a smaller "personal protection" shell-firing penknife was called "The Defender." In 1923, the Norman Shure Company of Chicago offered "Defenders" to the public via mail order for $3.25.

Another knife whose punch is deadlier than its cut was confiscated by Pennsylvania State Police at the Western end of the Commonwealth. This weapon featured a tiny, single-shot firing apparatus attached to the side of a heavy pocket knife. It fired a .22 short cartridge. Capable of firing with the blade open or shut, this weapon was used in a gang war battle in the Pittsburgh area in the middle '50s.

To close on an up-beat, we offer an unusual item, another of the early jack-of-all-weapons which used to be in the Golden State Arms collection. This number was a combination percussion pistol, switchblade knife, and corkscrew. The corkscrew is the trigger, and when it is pulled, the gun fires, and the blade springs up, into position as a miniature bayonet.

In another era, when walking sticks were as common as pocket knives, designers naturally put some kick in their canes. These walking sticks do more than simply look dangerous. In 1967, for example, the FBI LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN reported how an elderly man in a southern state disguised a single barrel .12 gauge shotgun to look like a heavy cane.

He slipped black bicycle tire tubing over the barrel, placed a cotton sock over the cut-off stock's pistol grip, and used thin wood covering to make this look like a cane handle. He placed a smaller piece of iron

pipe in the chamber so the weapon would take a single .410 gauge shell. His work completed, the senior citizen then used the gun — killing another man.

''Cane gun'' is a generic term, as all firearms combined with walking sticks are called ''cane guns,'' regardless of the construction or material of the device. The earliest ones came with the flintlock era weapons, and in 1814, Henry W. Vander Kleft obtained a British patent for his ''Walking Staff'' which included a flintlock pistol in the handle.

The most widely sold type of the percussion-fired cane guns was John Day's of England. It was first sold in 1823 as the Day Patent Cane. This first design was continued for almost 40 years before the Company introduced newer models which were as popular as the original.

In the United States, Remington made the best known cane guns, producing both rifle and pistol models in a variety of calibres. The earliest advertising for Remington cane guns came in 1859. Although the weapon was produced by Remington, the actual invention was patented by J. F. Thomas the year before — 1858. Remington was still producing and selling these firearms more than 20 years later, according to period advertisements, with the products of imitators being advertised in the pulp press as late as the 1920s.

A fairly mammoth cane gun, formerly in the Golden State Arms Collection, showed up in the early '50s. The weapon was a percussion-fired under-hammer gun with a detachable buttstock as an accessory. The heavy piece was bored for '53 calibre with a 30-inch barrel. Even carrying the weapon might cause a hernia, one observor noted.

Another, slimmer relation to the cane gun, not to be taken lightly as a weapon, though, is the combination of whip and firearm. The earliest ones were produced in England, concealing a small percussion pistol in the handle of the whip, which comes apart for loading and cleaning. Several of the examples of this type weapon as seen in collections are quite original in design and artistic in appearance.

One clever chap improvised the design into the next obvious step — an umbrella gun. One example, now in a private collection, has a pin-firing pepperbox pistol fitted into an umbrella. It has French markings, but no name on it. Another example, in a California collection, fires a .45 ACP slug from the improvised pistol disguised as the detachable handle for the umbrella.

Another collection displayed another type of umbrella gun, whose

core was simply too thick to be a standard type of raingear. That's because it was actually a long-barreled device which fired a .410 shotgun shell, using direct pointing to aim. A trigger was built into the handle, and, according to the owner this weapon was never meant to function as a normal umbrella, simply made to look like one externally. It was quite a mammoth bumbershoot.

A 19th Century school teacher's pointer looked a bit heavy at one end, and close examination showed it to be a detachable, ''hammerless'' firearm of .36 calibre. It was marked ''N. Lawson, 41 1896.'' There were no other inscriptions. The pistol was fitted tightly into the remainder of the pointer. This item is also in the latter private collection.

The ultimate example we ran across was a supposed heavy walking stick which housed several surprises at each end. A long wrist loop of leather hung on the handle end. Cleverly detached from one keeper, this became a thin, vicious, 15 inch long quirt with a steel fastening stud on its free end. Next, the handle detached, showing a .38 calibre single shot pistol with a 4-inch barrel. Beneath this sprouted a two-foot long, triangular blade. The combination pistol blade fit tightly into the outer ''scabbard'' which was made to look like a walking stick of about an inch and a half diameter. This device is owned by a private collector who refused to allow photographs or any mention of his location, which is how much he, and other collectors, fear theft these days.

Not only does one run the risk of being pointed, whipped and shot, there is also the possibility of getting belted. It's not an original idea, but, no less lethal.

The idea of putting a gun into a belt buckle is an old one, and not especially clever. The first ones date before the last century, although the percussion pistols used are large, clumsy, and not very secretive, except when worn with the lethal buckle on the back. These belt guns used a weight string device, so that when the wearer was told to raise his hands, he simply stood in front of his assailant, did as he was told, and the belt gun fired a slug into the surprised person standing in the firing line. Indeed, an update of one of these designs was featured on a ''McCloud'' television show in 1974.

In real life, at least several Nazi officers had belt buckle pistols designed which held a battery of four, .32 calibre barrels. These guns will fire one shot at a time in series, or, all four at once. One of these weapons is now in a private collection.

From real to reel, there is actress Ursula Andress, another one of a kind, who appeared in a rather good science fiction satire called ''The

Tenth Victim.'' Ms. Andress used a disguised firearm to dispose of one of her hunters in the early part of the film. The firearms were hidden in her bra, and the device, was, naturally, a double barreled firer. Obviously, as this film was meant as satire, the authors present the idea of a gun built into a bra solely for its conjectural value as an exercise in mechanics. We will pass up the opportunity to print a variety of bad puns which are too evident at this point.

Moving from bras to bikes, amateur gunsmiths may have studied World War II OSS field reports that told how European resistance groups sometimes built single-shot firearms into the configuration of bicycle pumps. The original designs are discussed in another chapter.

Boston Police confiscated a bycycle pump which seemed a bit fat for the thin two-wheeler it seemed to bog down. Suspicious officers had captured a homemade 20 gauge shotgun . . . all of 20 inches long built as the pump. The same thing has happened in Los Angeles, Denver, and, no doubt in other cities where bicycles are very common. Between 1972 and the summer of 1974, at least six pump-guns had been confiscated in Northern Ireland, one in London, and two in Saigon.

Most seem to follow the usual design of building the firing device into the tube, using a pump or trombone action to discharge the weapon. One unusual model, though, was confiscated in Ohio in 1970. It was a bit different. It used the pump handle as a collapsed stock which locked open. A push-button trigger built into the base of the pump, the cover of which was actually just a disguise, released a powerful spring further up along the barrel, which hit the firing pin, discharging a .410 shotshell. The weapon had been roughly boresighted, and two small dots of solder were somewhat aligned as very rough sighting aids. The actual barrel was the receiver portion, plus about 9 inches of tube. The weapon unscrewed to load and unload. The spring was manually reset with each loading.

The words ''Machine Bolt Gun'' were not a transposed misprint on the Los Angeles PD advisory. They meant that a motorcycle gang member had taken an ordinary piece of 5 8-inch machine bolt and turned it into a lethal .22 calibre firearm. The weapon, composed of five parts, each machined to the configuration of the original bolt, was ''dirtied outside,'' then fitted inconspicuously into the frame of one of the motor cycles as if it were standard equipment. The weapon fired by pulling back and releasing the heavy, spring-loaded hexagonal bolt head which drives a firing pin against the cartridge which is loaded into the bolt. The weapon was further disguised, when its bore was covered over with dirty paraffin wax, according to LAPD officers.

According to a 1969 issue of the FBI LAW ENFORCEMENT BULLETIN, two juveniles in a western city constructed a pellet-firing gun using an ordinary bicycle spoke. The youngsters removed the nipple from the end of the spoke, and forced BB shot pellets into the spoke hole of the nipple. Gunpowder was poured into the fluted end of the nipple, after which the spoke was threaded in that same end, behind the nipple. A lighted match was held under the nipple until the powder ignited, firing the pellets out of the other end. The weapon was used to do malicious mischief to retail store properties.

Other items are useful in disguising firearms, and sometimes create a very useful dual operation. Several policemen with whom the authors have spoken offer the opinion that they'd like a combination flashlight firearm, lighter, smaller, and handier than the design of the accessory flashlight for the Hi Standard police shotgun.

"I'm talking about a pistol built right into a heavy light we can use on a point basis," New York beat officer Sam Hammill emphasized.

A weapon of the type Sam wants was patented in 1922 by S. P. Cottrell of Buffalo, N.Y. the light is a conventional two D-cell type with a sliding button. A .22 calibre revolver screws into the front part of the flashlight casing, and, according to a company brochure, "aiming is unnecessary as the bullet travels to center of the light. The most practical defense arm every invented." It sold for $12.

Another disguised weapon currently being marketed to police officers is the "old Gun in a wallet" bit of the last century. Actually, this is nothing more than a holster shaped and produced to look like a wallet or key case. Actually, it hides either a small derringer or a tiny automatic pistol. Ads for these hidden guns were quite frequent around the turn of the century, e.g., "The reward for thieves' that every well-to-do gent should carry in his pocket . . ." as printed in POLICE GAZETTE. Late in 1973, an ad for the same basic device began running in SHOTGUN NEWS.

Guns made of water and gas pipe are discussed in another section. But, there's a different type of pipe gun, too, as any steady follower of spy films is aware. Literally, a smoker's pipe of the types used by gentlemen and ladies through the ages have also been packed with another smoking load — a hot shot.

There are several examples of pipe pistols found in collections. These are generally of classic and usual design, rather than produced as custom pipes for clandestine espionage use. They are supposed to look "plain." Most fire a .22 cartridge through the mouth-piece barrel, using a variety of triggering devices.

In the same breath, we have another refugee from spy thrillers.

Now, if these designs weren't so deadly real, perhaps you could say the designer of this weapon had seen Alan Ladd and Van Johnson in too many OSS films.

We refer to the cigarette lighters with single shot pistols built in as a surprise to light up someone for eternity. Starting with the original fake lighter guns issued in very small amount by the OSS, this basic design has seen a great upsweep in popularity, according to both FBI and BATF sources.

The new generation of guns disguised as fake lighters are being built and or converted by domestic radicals for thier own murderous uses. They simply replace the wick holder with a hollow steel tube, the cotton packing with lead or steel shielding, and add a simple triggering device to the base of the lighter.

With the regular top assembly in place, the weapon looks just like a regular cigarette lighter. It fires by flipping open the top, which exposes the steel tube barrel, flipping back the flexible trigger base, then releasing it.

One BATF agent who'd seen and tested one of the variations of this weapon cautioned experimenters against trying to build and fire their own, adding that his warning was more for safety than legality's sake.

"There are too many points of imperfection in this design to risk getting burned, bruised, or busted in any way", he smiled with serious concern.

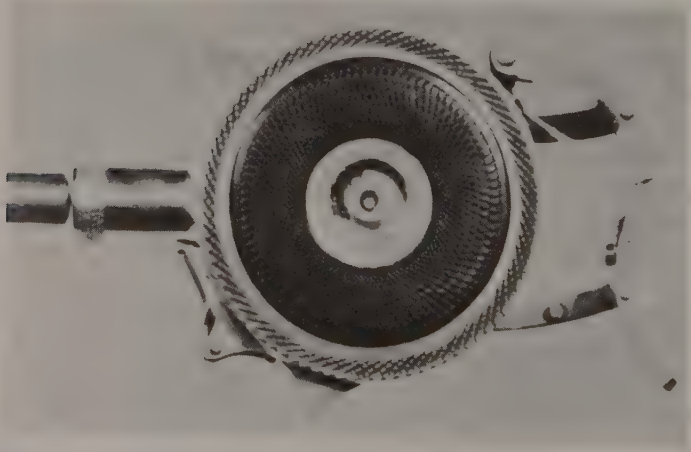
This has been a rather loose survey of the many types of disguised firearms. Perhaps, now, there have been enough examples given of the tools. Let's move on to the mechanics.

CREDIT: Frank R. Horner, courtesy of Ray Riling

The famed Remington Cane Gun.

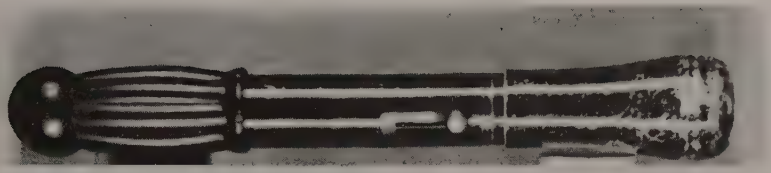
CREDIT: N. Y. Historical Society

The "new" Remington patent Cane Gun and revolver . . . an early sales poster.



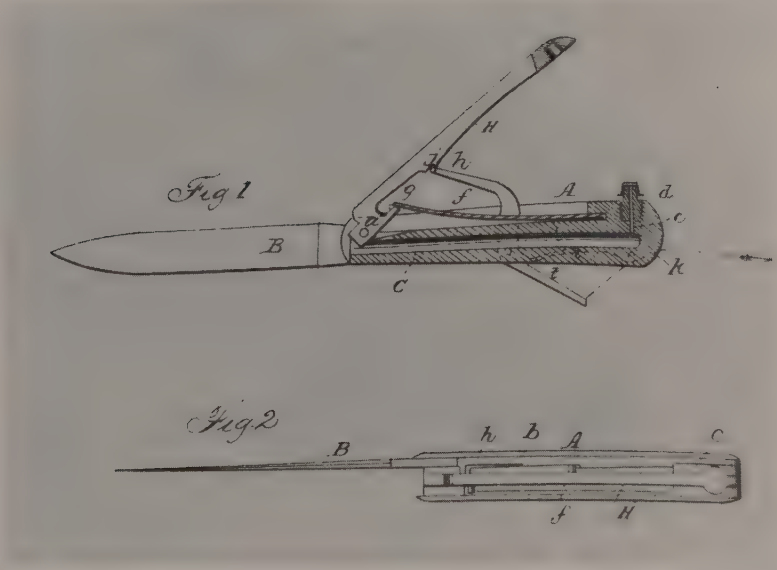
CREDIT: H. P. White

The original Chicago Palm Pistol . . . an early disguised and hidden firearm.



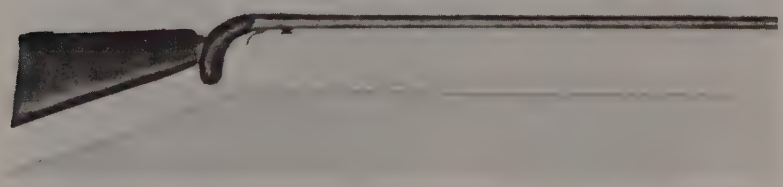
CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

A blackjack/firearm confiscated by the Balitmore PD.



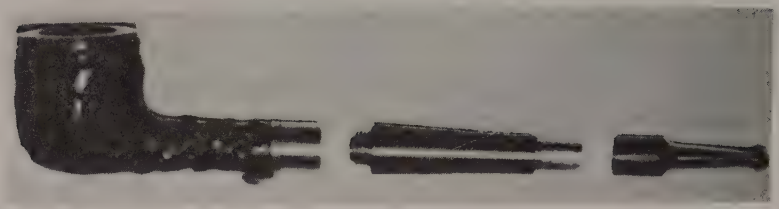
CREDIT: U.S. Patent Office

Sketch for the A. L. Peavey knife pistol combination weapon.

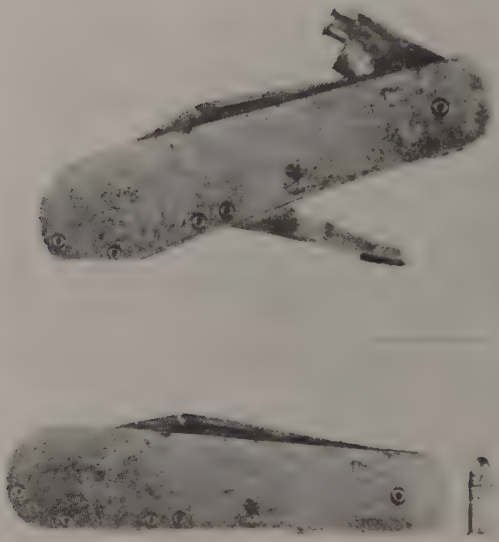


CREDIT: Golden State Arms

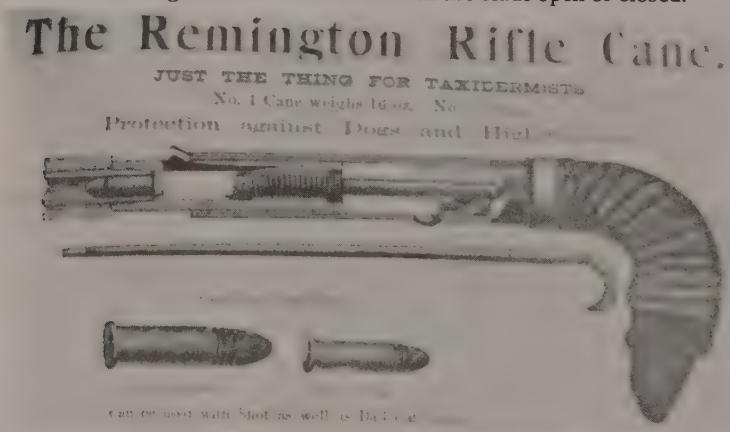
An underhammer cane gun with its optional buttstock attached. This unusual .53 calibre weapon, maker unknown, sold for only $45 in the late 1950s.



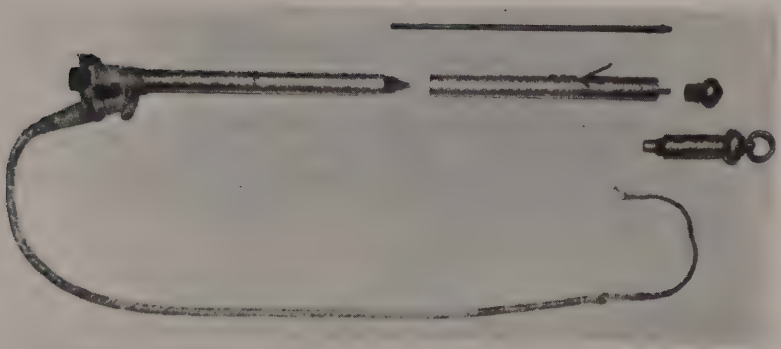
CREDIT: Dr. W. R. Funderburg, courtesy of Ray Riling
A standard pipe-disguised pistol, now held in a private collection.



CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police
This .22 calibre gun knife can be fired with the blade open or closed.

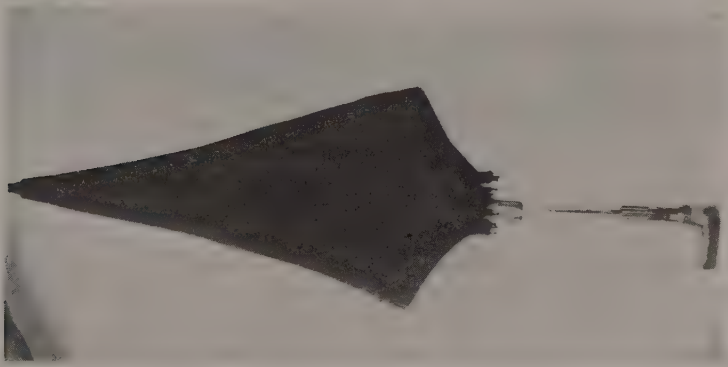


CREDIT: N.Y. Historical Society
Early advertising poster for the Remington Cane gun, rifle model.



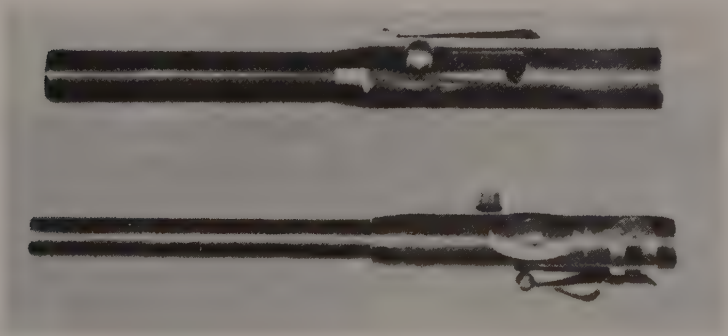
CREDIT: Dr. W. R. Funderburg, courtesy of Ray Riling

A rare whip pistol combination of disguised firearm.



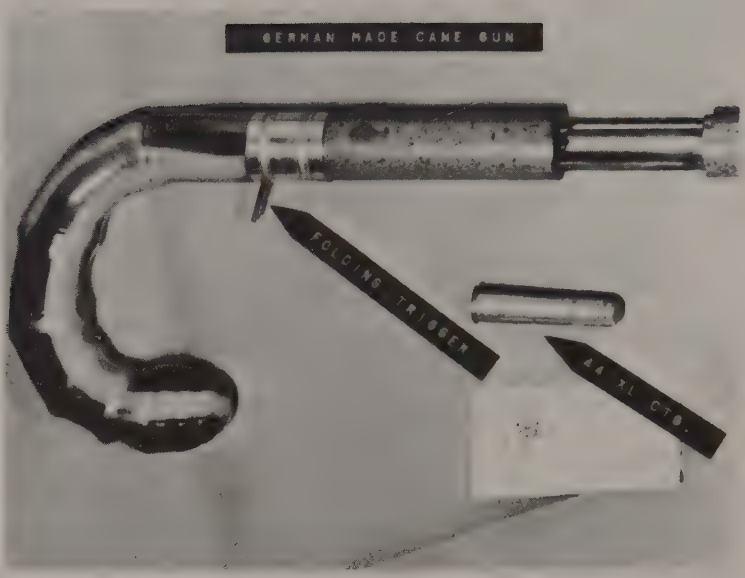
CREDIT: Eddie Reider, courtesy of Ray Riling

The umbrella pistol — now in a private collection.



CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police

Two .38 calibre pen guns confiscated near Philadelphia by the Pa. State Police. Workmanship was excellent on both, and both tested quite well.



CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

A modern version of the cane gun — made in Germany.

The purpose of terrorism is to terrorize. It is the only way a small country can take on an empire and win.

— Michael Collins
I.R.A.

Resistance, Anarchy, Freedom

The United States Army's Foreign Science & Technology Center claims that about 90 percent of a guerrilla operation's small arms are of the conventional, military-issue type. The remaining ten percent represent unusual, odd, and sometimes quite unique engineering designs and feats. They are the improvised, modified, and homebuilt firearms.

A standard supply operation brings military weapons to military troops. But, supply of an irregular army is quite different, indeed, often the most risky part of a guerrilla operation. For example, during Israel's uphill fight for independence, faced with the British embargo, the *Haganah* had to buy weapons from avaricious Arabs, sympathetic British troops, plus the usual group of gunrunners happy to make a buck. However, what couldn't be bought had to be produced.

According to Col. G. M. Payne of the Foreign Science & Technology Center, the more crude an improvised weapon's design the harder its production. His reason is that as the designs become more sophisticated, the likelihood increases that the firearm will incorporate major parts of a factory-made weapon.

At this point, the costs become more than poorer countries usually can afford, and we get back to improvised and modified weapons. One such example is the firearm copied from an existing design. In less fancy words, this signifies that someone buys a production line gun, then copies production, turning it out on his own. There is some history here.

For example, in India, during England's colonial rule, tribesmen were not allowed such luxuries as the Webley pistols the British officers carried. So, a few pistols were stolen and native craftsmen turned out a very clever copy known as the Khyber pistol — now a valued collector's item. According to the ordnance authority, retired Col. G. B. Jarrett, these older weapons were excellent, exact copies, but could be dangerous to shoot because many were made from low grade metals.

The genesis of many replica firearms seems to be the Orient, as the bulk of data and specimens come from that area. According to one

former British military adviser, "they always had to copy and improvise, as our weapons, which they wanted, were out of reach because of materials, cost, or colonial edict."

"I feel that the gun writers' myth of patient, wise oriental craftsman must also be buried at this point. Most of these copies are fairly crude and are turned out in a day or two. The better ones might take three days. But, these people are usually trying to win a war, not a quality of workmanship award," he added.

Another area which is highly publicized for its gun copies is in the Hindu Kush on the northern borders of India, which has given a name to an entire classification of firearms known as the "Khyber Pass" pistol and rifle copies.

These Afridi tribesmen have gun miths who turn out excellent copies of almost any firearm for which they have an original specimen. They dismantle the original weapon totally, then literally reproduce it, part by part, until the copy is complete. Although their most widely known product is the various copies of the .303 Enfields, they have also turned out copies of pen guns, cane guns, silenced rifles, plus copies of the Sten gun and the silenced Sten.

Indeed, these gunsmiths have forced British proof marks on their .303 Enfield rifles, and sold them to other tribesmen as originals. Their copies of British pistols are quite solid, too, and the models fired by author Minnery are quite solid and strong, even after years of repeated use.

One military officer related that the going price, circa 1972, for a G-3 machine gun was delivery in five days for $60. A copy of the Sten took three days and would cost the buyer $30. A .22 calibre Stinger-type pen gun could be made in a day for $5. Naturally, there is no paperwork on any of these weapons.

Similar weapons are made along the Ivory and Gold Coasts in Africa, where the gun copying business has thrived for well over a hundred years now. In North Africa, Arab and Bedouin gunsmiths traditionally produce copied and improvised rifles, sometimes selling examples of their work to tourists.

Although the Mau Mau terrorists used many homemade weapons, the later Simba troops used few of these improvised firearms. According to Major Mike Hoare, most of the Simba's modern weapons were from Communist China, while few were homemade. They simply didn't need to go home gunshop route, as the Chinese were quite anxious to supply weapons in an attempt to gift their way into power to the exclusion of the U.S. and the USSR.

What improvisations that were captured came off as fairly crude

devices using the most simple of engineering, plus the parts of obsolete or discarded European firearms. They showed poor workmanship and not much originality, according to most observers. This criticism is probably of little comfort to someone who was shot with one of these devices that passed for a firearm simply by definition.

Actually almost any competent machinist who had the proper lathe, milling equipment, and various raw materials could turn out an exact copy of almost any firearm. His degree of accuracy would depend upon his mechanical ability. On the other hand, in many eastern and oriental countries, replica firearms have been produced using pipes, iron bits, and other scraps tooled by hand files, hammers, plus hand-powered drills. In extreme cases, e.g., the jungle warfare workshops during WWII and Vietnam, guerilla forces used bamboo and other wooden parts for the firing mechanism of their improvised weapons.

Because many of the small shops don't have proper milling machinery, as Major Keogh reports, their gunsmiths often use a brazing technique for assembly of pistol frames, slides, and the more complex, smaller parts.

Many of these pistols are smoothbore, simply to avoid boring by hand and also to keep the firing pressures lower. The ones which are bored are usually crudely done, or else a barrel is used from a regular firearm.

Despite some proof markings, generally Chinese or Thai, most of the relatively recent copies do not carry proof or other marks which would indicate country of origin. These weapons rarely carry meaningful serial numbers, either, and if a number appears, it is likely to appear the same way on more than one firearm. Richard Hermann writes that these are used for decoration, while Lt. Joe Benson, USAR, adds that these "serial" numbers are simply there for prestige or because the producer decided to make his copy as "authentic" as possible.

Along these same lines, the markings of the original weapons, including trademarks, designs, company names, patent dates, and other manufacturing legends are also reproduced by the copier. Sometimes these are done quite professionally, while other speciments turn up to indicate that the copier had no idea what he or she was doing — simply reproducing symbols to their best or worst ability.

To report every ersatz manufacture of a standard, production firearm would turn this book into a long listing of examples. However, several mentions follow as representative. An Astra 400

copy was reported by Dennis Riordan, who noted that a commercial offering of that pistol actually turned up an unknown copy without a serial number or readily identified builder. According to Mr. Riordan, the copy was a visual duplicate, but that the critical measurements of internal parts were off, and none of the copied components were interchangeable with production peces, despite the fact that tolerances are not exceedingly critical for this large blowback pistol.

Another Astra 400, owned by Major Keogh, was described by Dr. J. Howard Matthews, of the University of Wisconsin Chemistry Department, as a "mongrel . . . and illegitimate child." He suggests some of the rifling was done by a blacksmith, and that the rest of the weapon was a rough and obvious copy.

Major Keogh, also had the extraordinarily rare fortune to visit the Ordnance Technology Development Center of the Combined Service Force of the Republic of the Republic of China in Taipei, Taiwan, Here, he witnessed an unusual collection of military weapons, including many unusual and rare speciments of copied firearms.

Included in the collection of copies, for example, is a Tokarev pistol manufactured in China in 1943, but as a production item, not as a one-of-a-kind. Another is a copy of the M1911A1 pistol which carries the inscription, "Pittsburgh Made in USA" on the left side of the plate, a reference, we guess, to Pittsburgh's Union Switch and Signal Company which made issue .45s during WWII.

Major Keogh also cataloged some rare Japanese pistols which are basically copies of either the Browning type pocket pistols or the Colt pocket automatics. One, marked *Sugiura Shiki,* is a rare copy of the Browning pistols of about .25 calibre. This weapon is in 6.35mm. The second carries the same inscription about the manufacturer, Sugiura, and could fire the 8mm Nambu cartridge. It is a bit larger than the Colt .32 or .380 pistol.

He says the pistols appear to have been production copies, perhaps produced in Manchuria or in a Northern Chinese plant during the 15 years of Japanese occupation of those areas. The markings, he said, are die-stamped, rather than hand-engraved.

The major rationale for improvised firarms is for use by military guerrilladom, as we've stated before. During WWII, allied resistance movements were largely guided by the British Special Operations Executive (S.O.E.), and, to a lesser degree, by the American Office of Strategic Services (O.S.S.). Basically, the two organizations were charged with aiding friendly resistance groups to organize and conduct subversive warfare of all kinds in German and Japanese occupied countries.

Although the S.O.E. was not formally chartered until August of 1940, they got into action early and did well, considering their Axis counterparts had been conceived much earlier, and in action for nearly three years prior to the British efforts.

Operationally, the S.O.E. was organized on a Country Section basis, e.g., a complete section for Norway, one for Denmark, Greece, Burma, etc. Later, the O.S.S. followed this same format. In each country, allied "agents," usually military men working covertly, equipped, trained, advised, and sometimes led guerrilla bands of native resistance fighters against the Germans or Japanese.

One of the major problems was, of course, arms and related supplies. Massive airdrops of weapons and ammunition were accomplished using the airpower of both the U.S. Army Air Corps and the Royal Air Force. On the other hand, it was sometimes necessary for local resistance groups to manufacture their own small arms, or to modify existing weapons, as the allied supply routes were not expressways of plenty in the early years of fighting.

The War also put the allied governments in the zip gun business with an eye to upgrading the product. From the black arts cubbyholes on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, such goodies as the U.D. submachine gun, Col. Dolphin's Welrod, the Liberator, Stinger, and DeLisle Commando Carbine came into being. These modified and improvised weapons were designed for use in the resistance movements, and had at least three criteria in common: Cheap-deadly; and simple.

At least one U.S. officer "invented" a homemade gun while serving with the firearm-scarce Phillippine guerillas on Leyte in the early '40s. Ensign Iliff D. Richardson, USNR, who also carried the rank of Major in the Philippine Guerilla Army, created the original design of the ubitquitous Phillipine Gurilla Gun from two pieces of pipe, a chunk of wood and a nail.

The wood was a rough-shaped buttstock with a hole bored in the small end to accept about half the length of larger pipe fashioned into a crude receiver. The nail was placed in the hole at the back of the receiver. Then, the 12 gauge homemade buckshot cartridge was loaded into the barrel. The gun was gingerly put together and fired when its owner got close to the enemy.

Firing was a matter of clamping the gun under the arm and slamming the pipe section back into the receiver, hopefully catching the shell primer on the nail, then . . . BLOOMMM . . ., the Emperor had lost another soldier and the Philippine Guerrilla Army gained another real firearm. According to one news story after the war, this

homemade style gun was called "The simpliest, sturdiest, most deadly small arm the world has seen." Ensign Major Richardson must have had a fine press agent.

After the War, Iliff Richardson tried to make a commercial version of his weapon, calling it the M4 Guerrilla Gun and offering it for sale in 1946 for $7.21. The idea didn't take, the guns didn't sell, and the M4 joined other "sure fire" sales ideas in that great wasteland of commercial flops.

At least one collector recalls the commercial model of this shotgun, as WWII-vet Guy Anliss says, "I sure do know about it, I saw one in the hardware store in New England a year or so after the war — maybe early in '47."

He added that the shotgun had a rear pistol grip and a trigger which acted as a safety device. He related that the price was "eight or nine dollars, as I recall." This tallies with the research of John Minnery, who says the unit also came with a foregrip fastened to the barrel to make the "pumping" easier.

Interestingly, this design is somewhat like the modification made to an old Winchester riot gun by Kurt Saxon, a description of which is in another chapter of this book.

History was kinder to the Philippine gun's inventor, though, as Richardson gained literary fame as the protagonistic inspiration for war correspondent Ira Wolfert's AMERICAN GUERRILLA IN THE PHILIPPINES, a best-seller in 1945 and still read today.

In that book, Richardson, through Wolfert, describes the jungle factory manned by the Philippine guerrillas to produce firearms and other ordnance for use against the Japanese. He wrote, "We scrounged around and got a hand forge, some hack saws, and a file. That was our small arms factory."

The "factory" was placed in a one-room house about 10 by 20 feet. Most of the production, Richardson reported, was confined to cartridges using all homemade ingredients excepting the cartridge casings. Everything else — from bullets to powder — was improvised.

The pipe gun has long been a part of Philippine culture, and has been used by Filipinos against the forces of most colonial nations, including the U.S., as well as against other Filipinos. Associated Press reports from Manila in 1973 and 1974 indicate that when anti-Marcos guerrillas were captured after a raid, one of the famed Philippine pipe shotguns was captured.

In addition to their "trombone shotgun," they are credited with producing homemade versions of Thompson and M3 submachine

guns, Sten guns, plus a host of U.S. British, and Japanese rifles and pistols. They also turned out rifles and pistols using pipe and other wood metal scrap. Indeed, to truly confiscate firearms from these hardy people would necessitate ripping out their very plumbing systems as well!

For example, when the Philippine armed forces and police were fighting the Hukbalahap forces, a number of modified Japanese Arisaka rifles were captured, as well as at least one cut-down, full auto conversion of the M1 carbine. Later, one cutdown and sawed-off carbine was liberated from Muslim forces early in 1974. The "HUK" campaign yielded many stories and stores of other firearms modified and improvised from existing weapons and spare parts.

Although some modified firearms have turned up among the most recent civil outbursts in the Philippines, the majority are either issue or sporting weapons which somehow fell into rebel use. Despite this modern era of firepower, a number of the homemade rebel or "Paltic" weapons were seized during the fighting with Muslims which began in the Provinces in 1973. These included a variety of shotguns, pistols, rifles, and a few automatic weapons. Some of the shotgun designs were quite advanced, such as a six-shot, revolving cylinder weapon.

Back during WWII, another simple, improvised firearm which was later mass produced for use by U.S. Allies was a real "nickle and dime" job, according to former U.S. Marine Sergeant Jerry Wilkins, who saw the guns in the Pacific in 1945.

Called the "Liberator," this weapon was officially designated the FP45. The small, sheet-metal stamped, inexpensive weapon was designed in 1942 and went through several changes in design and three different prototypes were evolved.

The weapon was more than a nuisance. It was an extremely effective pistol within its maximum range of 25 feet. The intention with the Liberator was to allow the partisan to kill the enemy and take his gun.

On May 8th, 1942, the Chief of U.S. Military Intelligence requested that 1,000,000 of the new weapons be made. To underscore its secrecy even the blue-prints were filled with misnomers and misleading descriptions. The factory workers did sub-assemblies and did not know what they were producing. The name "Liberator" was not hung on this gun until after the war, while its official misleading designation was "FP 45". One description listed it as a flare pistol.

The barrel was made from commercial seamless tubing, while the

frame was stamped sheet metal. A vertically sliding breech plate held the cartridge in the chamber. The firing pin was mounted on a die-cast zinc block that was inter-connected to the mainspring, sear and trigger. The whole thing was spot-welded and rivted together. The butt had a sliding cover, inside which tenrounds of ammo could be held. Unloaded the weapon weighed one pound, and was 5½ inches long.

The one million weapons were completed by the Fall of 1942, at a production cost of $1.72 per pistol. The Guide Lamp Division of GM was the manufacturer. Each Liberator was individually packaged in a waxed cardboard box, inside of which were: 10 rounds of .45 ACP ammo; a sheet of comic-strip instructions in sign language; a wooden ramroad for ejecting spent casings, and a wood spacer block to stop the parts from rattling.

The total cost for a packaged weapon was $2.10. Today, in the U.S. these guns sell for $100 each . . . when you can get one.

At least one of these pistols was silenced. This model was brought back from France by an American officer. This lash-up was undoubtedly the product of an Underground workshop, as no silenced Liberators were produced by GM or the OSS.

A later, two-shot, model was O.S.S.-tested, but did not see service. However, thousands of the single-shot Liberators were said to have been circulated all over Europe and the Far East. It is possible that this weapon killed more men than the big Colt Automatic because the firer only had one chance and he made sure his shot was a fatal one. It was issued to the Philippine Police for a short time after the War.

On the other side of the Pacific battle lines, the Japanese also had their improvised firearms. They were, though, weapons of 11th hour desperation.

Preparing for the ultimate invasion by the allied forces, the Japanese set about to produce a huge supply of simple firearms for civil defense use. In 1944, they produced a very simple rifle to fire the standard 7.7mm service cartridge. When that ammunition proved too powerful, they switched to an 8mm version, shortening the weapon also.

Later, the Japanese ordnance people came up with a very simple design which could be produced in local machine shops, calling the weapon the National Rifle. It was simply a piece of pipe with a block of wood for a stock. It shot a projectile using a black powder charge, fired by a primer-igniter cap placed over a flash hole in the barrel. They also produced a pistol version of this weapon.

In addition to the homemade defense weapons, the Japanese produced a copy of the M1 Garand rifle. This is not really newsworthy, considering they had also copied earlier designs, e.g. the Hotchkiss, Lewis and Vickers machineguns. The Garand copy did not see any extended production or service use. It differed from the original only and minor details, according to the late Maj. Gen. Julian Hatcher, who examined specimens of the copy.

One roughly finished Japanese autoloading pistol which has been called the Japanese Suicide Automatic is at least an oddity, if not an example of a modification of a standard-type firearm. This pistol may be fired simply by pressing an extension bar sear which runs along the frame of the weapon. It is not necessary to touch the trigger. One account contends the weapon was to be used by orthodox Japanese officers who wished to commit the honor of suicide at the very last minute. While handing the pistol to his captor in the standard manner, the officer pressed the bar and trigger assembly. It was a commercial item but many Japanese soldiers had them for protection rather than seppeku.

One of the more exotic items in the collection Col. G. B. Jarrett gathered for his fine museum at Aberdeen Proving Ground, is an unusual sword using a Nambu pistol as its handle. Other displays there include a rare Chinese copy of the famous German Mauser automatic pistol, plus a very rare Soviet copy of the British Sten gun.

Despite Asia being the ''home'' of improvised firearms and gun copies, the real hot use of these weapons was in the European theater, where resistance forces used improvised modified firearms with lethal success.

Despite the fact that Yugoslavia officially surrendered to the Germans after 10 days of combat in April of 1941, many citizens refused to stop to fight. They fled to the mountainous countryside, and like most other German-controlled countries, set up well-organized bands of guerrillas.

Despite the highly competitive antics of the Americans, British, and Soviets to supply up-to-date weapons, some of these guerrillas relied on their own small arms shops to supply homemade weapons. And, like China, where Communist and Nationalist put aside, temporarily, their own battle and united to fight the invading Japanese, the Communist Partisans and the anti-Communist Chetniks fought the Germans, instead of each other — usually.

Obviously, the simplicity and ease of production of the British Sten submachine gun made it an ideal weapon for use by resistance groups with access to relatively unsophisticated gun shops. According to

Maj. F. W. A. Hobart, an internationally known small arms authority, "homemade" Sten guns were produced in some quantity in Denmark, France, Holland, Israel, and Cyprus. In addition, Stens or close variations were produced in China, Norway, Sweden, Yugoslavia, the USSR, and, surprisingly, in Germany, as we shall see shortly.

Like other European countries, resistance sparked in Denmark, too. For example, in May of 1944, there were about 6200 guerrillas, but by the end of the war, there were nearly 45,000 persons involved fighting the Germans. According to Danish records, by August of 1944, their underground workshops were turning out copies of U.S. carbines and British Sten guns, working from plans and sample weapons furnished by the allies.

One such shop was located in the village of Holte, near Copenhagen, where a small group of men and women turned out more than 150 perfectly-machined Sten copies. This production was achieved between the end of 1944 and May of 1945. Ironically, they stole much of the powered machinery from the Germans and jerry-rigged the rest themselves from other stolen German parts.

Norwegian resistance workers made many single-shot rifles and pistols during the war, as individual civilians in that rugged country joined the effort. The larger shops, with "larger" being a very relative concept, were busily turning out automatic weapons, though.

The thinking in Norway was also that the Sten was so simple and reliable a weapon there was no reason it could not be made in country workshops, as well as the homemade designs, and so it was. Another factor, according to Norwegian officials, was that as Norway was a low-priority invasion target during the final Allied offensive, regular weapons were airdropped to other countries.

While entire weapons were made whole in Danish shops, the resistance in Norway used several shops to make component parts and sub-assemblies, which were then assembled in several super-secret locations. A total of 800 Sten guns were scatter-produced in Norway during 1944, with about 200 others completed by April of 1945, when production ceased.

In addition, creative resistance gunsmiths turned common bicycle pumps into lethal firearms, converting them from pumping air to firing a single 9mm cartridge. Examples of these improvised bicycle pump guns were seen in Norway, Denmark, Holland, and France. Obviously, in these European countries where bicycles were so popular and widely used, this caused great consternation for the Germans and their puppet police.

One former resistance figher, now a ''young'' man in his 70s, told author Truby that he knows of several cache locations which still contain weatherproofed copies of Sten guns, plus ammunition, ''just in case we need them again, lad,'' he added — this, more than 30 years after the end of their war!

Many of the homemade, modified and improvised weapons used by the Resistance disappeared into the Black Market which flourished after the War. Thousands of submachine guns, rifles, and pistols simply ''vanished,'' turning over millions of dollars. Fortunately, a few of the homemade specimens ended up in museums throughout Europe.

Earlier, we stated that the Germans copied the British Sten. In addition, the Reich gunsmiths produced other improvised weapons, especially toward the end. However, among collectors, the German ''Sten'' is the best known.

The Germans, whose excellent weapons designs have been copied by most other nations, took revenge when they made two copies of Sten-type submachine guns late in World War II. Only one model, though, could be regarded as an actual Sten copy, the other being a re-designed modification. The true copy was the *Gerat Potsdam,* a cover name for an identical copy of the Sten Mk II produced by the Mauser Works. According to most reports, these weapons even carried British proof and manufacturers' markings.

There were from 25,000 to 28,000 of these weapons delivered by early in 1945, after Mauser engineers had examined two captured British Sten guns the year before. The idea was to arm German guerrillas and German sympathetic nationals, e.g., in Egypt, Greece, Italy, etc., to continue last-ditch fighting using ''friendly'' weapons. The dirty tricks possible with counterfeit Stens were limitless.

The same Mauser engineers suggested improvements in the Sten design, and a second submachine gun model, known as the MP 3008, was turned out as a modified Sten-type weapon. This sturdy, excellent weapon was intended for civilian defense use as the allied and Soviet armies drew closer. Mauser turned production over to five other firms, but only 10,000 firearms were delivered by the end of the war.

In addition to the quicky-copies, the German designers, their backs to the Eastern Front, came up with a fairly clever weapon which deserved more study and development than military history has provided. The VGI-5, a late entry in a series of *Volksturm* (People's Army) weapons, was a semiautomatic carbine with some excellent ideas behind it.

Chambered for the same short 7.92 mm cartridge used in the *Strumgewehr* 44 assault rifle, the VGI-5 fired from a 30-round magazine, using a blowback action. Most ordnance experts say the weapon was very sturdy and capable of much better performance than the "rushed to production examples" the Nazis pushed out.

This weapon was designed with small work shop production in mind, according to Don Stoehr, who wrote a definitive article on the VGI-5 rifle in the 1972 issue of GUNS & AMMO ANNUAL.

The sights, workmanship and parts of the weapon are not what you would expect of a factory firearm. However, for the rifle's purpose, time, and design for production, it surely hit its target. Although Mr. Stoehr had no information on the combat use of this weapon, he tells us that several thousand were made, and most were probably captured by the Russians, According to our latest information from Germany, he's correct, as most of the weapons were used in the last defense of the homeland against the Russians.

An interesting German pistol was obtained late in 1945 by John Cooper, then serving with the U.S. Army Air Corps. Mr. Cooper said the pistol, a straight blowback design in .32 calibre, was given to him by a resident in the Bavarian town of Furstenfeldbrueck. The man said he had constructed the pistol in his basement during the war for personal protection. The weapon has no markings, and, according to Tom Knox, director of the National Automatic Pistol Collectors Association, bears a striking resemblance to several pistols attributed by Dr. J. Howard Matthews to Asian workshops.

It's comforting to note that prior to 1944, the German and Japanese military leaders snorted at the effectivenesss of the Resistance and its improvised firearms. Yet, when these dictatorships started down the drain, they also turned to civilian resistance and the homebuilt guns. Success and victory had interesting influences on judgements.

Likewise many writers put down the various resistance movements and made light of the contributions of the S.O.E. and the O.S.S. during WWII. We feel this is unfair, and, perhaps, a myopic example of Monday morning quarterback hindsight. On the other hand, General Dwight Eisenhower wrote in May of 1945:

> *No nation has a monopoly of courage; every nation has brave men. This fact both Germans and Japanese overlooked; they expected by execution and torture, by reprisal and concentration camp, to stifle all opposition and bring all peoples to their will, to work for them as salves. Every oppressed nation gave them the lie.*

While no final assessment of the operational value of Resistance action has yet been completed, I consider the disruption of enemy rail communications, the harassing of German road moves and the continual and increasing strain placed on German war economy and internal security service throughout Occupied Europe by the organized forces of Resistance, played a very considerable part in our complete and final victory.

Or, as former O.S.S officer Mitchell WerBell, who served in the China Burma Indian theater, replied to a critic of their resistance operations, ''Don't just listen to me go ask the Japanese!''

Meanwhile, in late war Burma, their Army Ordnance Workshop, working with the cooperation of Italy's Giandoso brothers, produced a modified version of the TZ-45 submachine gune late in the summer of 1945. The Burmese called their weapon the BA-52. Credit for the Italian cooperation is given to the Allies, who convinced the arms makers this was the best way to make friends.

This modification was not totally a workshop orphan, as much of the machinery was actually transported from Italy, and that which was built in Burma came from Giandoso blueprints.

This same weapon was used by the Burmese army through the early 1960s, when various models of Sterling submachine guns were purchased from England.

A hybrid special mission weapon used effectively by the British in three or four wars began its life as an improvised and modified firearm toward the end of WWII. The DeLisle carbine, a compact, silenced, cutdown version of the Lee-Enfield rifle which fired the .45 ACP cartridge, after the internal mechanism was altered to handle this rimless pistol cartridge.

The prototype worked so very well — silent, but deadly — that the SOE ordered production late in WWII, and factory models of the DeLisle saw action in Europe, then later, in Korea, Africa, Malaya, on Cyprus, and, even by Australian troops in Vietnam in the middle '60s.

World War II really never ended, it just split, like an atom, and moved into different arenas featuring different contestants. The post-war period has been a global conflagration of so-called brushfire wars. One of the earliest of these in which improvised weapons figured significantly, was the Arab Israeli fighting.

Considering there was such a huge volume of discarded armament laying all over the Middle East, the initial arms procurement was not too much of a problem. All it took was money, and U.S.-based fund raising for the Israelis and ''other'' nation funding for the Arabs through oil sales covered that.

Yet, while purchase became easier, transportation and storage became tougher as the British cracked down on them. So, the Jews began to turn out their own rifles, pistols and submachine guns, working in underground arms shops — just as many of them had done in Europe during the War, when Britain was the ally.

The British imposed a death penalty on arms makers and carriers. Yet, Jewish produced firearms turned up all over the countryside. There were not enought to conduct a winning war, but, somehow . . . they did it.

The *Haganah's* underground munitions industry was known as *Ta'as,* and much of the machinery to produce the weapons came from the United States, where sympathetic industrialists sold the equipment as "scrap." This "scrap metal" was quickly and quietly reassembled in Isreal and became working machinery for the production of their modern small arms. These small arms shops turned out rifles and Israeli copies of the British Sten. In addition to the Israeli shops, at least one gun shop operation in Italy was turning out weapons for the Jewish cause.

Another Israeli arms procurement outfit was *Rekhesh,* one of the most secret activities of the underground *Hagahah.* Operating with a plans staff of less than 50 people, this organization was responsible for buying, stealing, and building arms for its parent group's troops.

According to Yigal Allon, formerly Deputy Prime Minister of Israel and one of its outstanding military commanders, *Rekhesh* stole one of the first four new Sten guns brought into Egypt early in WWII and secretly sent it to Tel Aviv. After testing, the *Ta'as* people made two prototype copies — one an replica, the other with a collapsible stock. In the middle of world war, the Israelis had decided to produce their own submachine guns without telling their strict "parents," the British.

Allon commented dryly, "We knew WWII was just a lull in the Arab plan to exterminate us, so we thought we might use the confusion of global conflict to store arms for our own defense, later."

Scrap iron is hard to come by anytime in a place like Israel, but during a raging war? Yet, somehow, armouries were raided, where old Enfield and Springfield rifles, plus firearms from the Napoleonic, Austro-Hungarian, and Victorian era were stolen to produce parts of the new homemade firearms. The first ones off the line were tested and stored in the desert near Kibbutz Ruhama, northwest of Beer-sheba.

Other "arms institutes," as the Israelis called their underground factories, sprang up, producing weapons against the time when the Jews would have to defend themselves against their neighbors.

When the fighting did come, improvised and homemade weapons played a large part in the battles which ran from 1946 to 1949. The Middle East was not the only area in which war continued, though. Indonesia fought for independence through late '40s, using many homemade weapons, the most famous of which were the guerrilla's copies and improvisations of British small arms. Easiest to produce, of course, was that old standby, the Sten gun.

Also at the end of the 1940s, an American standard submachine gun of late WWII fame gained the dubious status of being copied. The U.S. M3A1, or ''Greasegun,'' was copied, almost intact, by Chiang Kai Shek's ordnance people. They named their model the M36. By the way, to figure when Chinese model weapons began production, it all starts with the beginning of the Chinese Republic calendar year which began in 1911. Thus, the Model 36 submachine gun was first produced in 1947.

The Chinese copy of the U.S. weapon was produced both on the Mainland by the Communists, and on the Islands by the Nationalists. This Type 36 weapon is almost identical with the M3A1, as it will function with both 11mm and .45 ACP ammuniction. Both the Taiwan and Peking armories also turn out versions of this weapon in 9mm. Examination of various Type 36 weapons show that their manufacture is generally inferior to the U.S. issue piece.

Originally duplicated with U.S. approval by Chiang Kai Shek in 11 mm., the M3A1 was copied by Chairman Mao's gunsmiths and converted to 9mm. The Peking redesigners modified it more, adding what has been evaluated as a ''highly effective'' silencer to their weapon. It is known officially as the ChiCom Type 37 submachine gun. Tested by the U.S. Army's Foreign Science — Technology Center, this weapon has a 70 percent sound reduction with its silencer.

Supposedly, the Model 36 copy had its start in Nanking, on the mainland in 1948, but all production and machinery was moved to Formosa when Chairman Mao's people started closing in on the facilities. The submachine gun was put into full production on Formosa with U.S. blessing, probably without royality payments, in 1950. At this time, the weapon was redesignated the M-39, in yet another effort to wipe out the stigma of the Republic of China army being kicked off their country.

The weapon is very similar to the M3A1, except of various adaptations necessary for the conversion to the 9mm cartridge. These changes have cut the weight of the weapon nearly one pound from the original version. A full description of the mechanical conversions

may be read in Nelson and Lockhoven's excellent and thorough treatise on submachine guns.

The Nationalist Chinese also copied the British Sten, producing it as their Model M-38 submachine gun. Although older examples exist of a few Sten copies made in OSS gunshops during the old CBI days of WWII, the newer copy weapon went into limited production in 1949. However, Mao's reinitiation of their Civil War after the defeat of the Japanese drove the Chiang people onto Formosa, so factory production lines didn't begin spewing out Chinese Stens until very late in 1950. This copy is identical to the regular Sten except that semi-automatic fire is impossible, plus other differences which are covered in other, more technical, books.

In the meantime, there were other problems facing the free world. Although Malaya was simply another Colonial boil ready to burst from the pus of British mistreatment, it grew worse under the Japanese during WWII. The people had gotten a certain amount of self-government by the Japanese, something they were unused to under British colonial rule. Also, they had seen the British backed off and beaten by Japanese troops, closer to their own color and value system. The post-war months seemed ready for some sort of rebellion, as the British had come back after the Japanese defeat.

In keeping with the times and propaganda, the rebellion was easily and totally blamed on communist influence. The weapons were a mixed bag of left-over WWII firearms, plus homemade modifications and improvisations. That fighting is an excellent study in the history of guerrilla operations and the psychology of that type of warfare.

Despite the scope or consequence of the fighting, the British never called its opponents "enemy" or "soldiers" or "rebels." True to Crown propaganda, the Malaysian people fighting the British were known as "bandits" in almost all news stories from Malaya.

On the line, though, the secretive phantom patrols of the British Special Air Service (S.A.S.) used such modified weapons as the silenced versions of the Sten, Sterling, Austen, and Owen submachine guns, the DeLisle Carbine, and various sawed-off shotguns.

Against this, the other side had a collection of firearms made from pieces of WWII leftovers, plus guns made from what were literally raw materials hammered into shape in jungle shops. Later, of course, Soviet and Chinese espionage services got modern weapons into the fight on "their" side.

As one military observer wrote:

The West ended up on the chilly side of this cold war because its rulers made it atomic powerful, while the little countries and the Communist-supported uprising in Third World nations stayed with the pragmatic idea of simple man to man weapons. . . The foot soldier won again with his sometimes homemade weapon . . . like the American frontiersman against the British aristocratic soldier.

These wars bring out unusual weapons. And, as Korea brought forth the super-sniper rifles, there was a later follow-up. An interesting idea for just such a modified weapon popped up in the middle '60s, when anti-communist soldier-of-patriotism Edward Arthur, who both fought for and against Fidel Castro, described the testing of a .50 calibre sniper rifle. In his article, he wrote he fired the gun and was impressed with its accuracy. He also indicated that one Cuban exile group, the Freedom Fighters, were trying to have such a weapon built in the United States. They hoped to make sniping hits at up to 2000 yards with it. There is no record if they were successful in either getting the weapon, or, if they did, in using it on the Island.

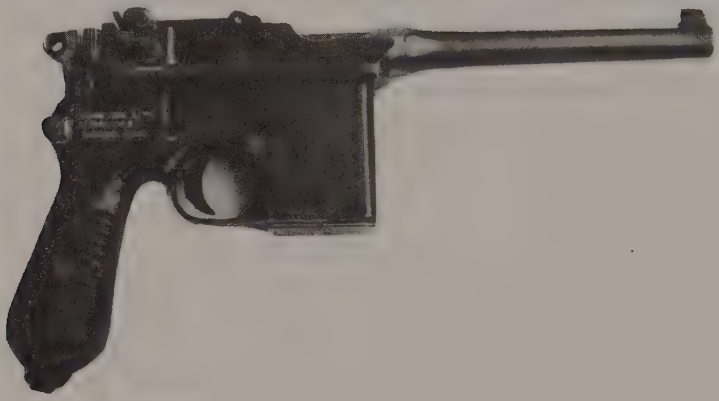
Of course, the improvised weapons have their place in guerrilla war, but they are no match for production model military-issue small arms, as the brave freedom fighters in Hungary learned in 1956, or the Czechs in the next decade, or the Filippinos trapped in the open with their single shot pipe guns by President Marcos' submachine gun-firing army troops in 1973 and 1974.

Although not the same situation, the fighting in Northern Ireland has brought forth some improvised modified firearms. In 1970, British Army troops in Belfast captured what had originally been a demonstrator model Lee-Enfield rifle of WWII vintage. The cutaway and cut-down rifle had an 8-inch barrel, no wood up front, and had the stock cut into a pistol grip. The .303 weapon was fully capable of firing, and when found, had four cartridges in the magazine.

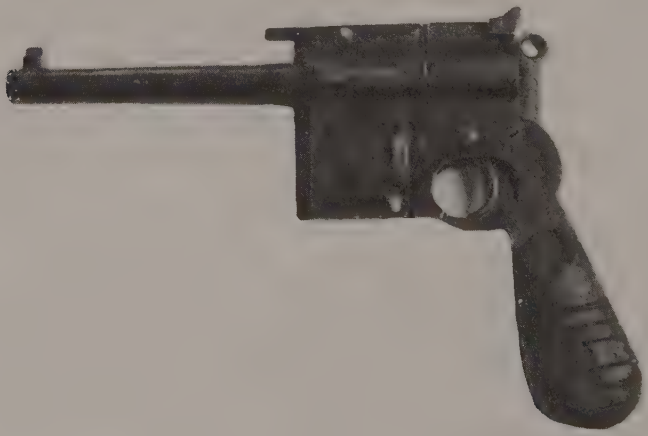
Several cutdown rifles and sawed-off shotguns show up during almost very publicized arms capture in Ireland, and one rare haul turned up a Sten submachine with a homemade silencer. In another reported case, two commercial style U.S. AR 15's which had been converted to full auto fire and a converted M1 carbine were captured by British forces.

Speaking of guerrilla weapons, either stolen, modified or improvised, former British officer and counter-terrorist fighter T. R. W. Young insists there is only one criterion to consider about a combat weapon — be it a handheld, fuse-fired muzzle loaded pipe or a fully automatic M16, "... its ability to kill other men. If is does, employ it, regardless of what it looks like."

CREDIT: Maj. Richard Keogh
A Chinese copy of the Mauser pistol, with Chinese Army Ordnance Seal behind the selector switch.



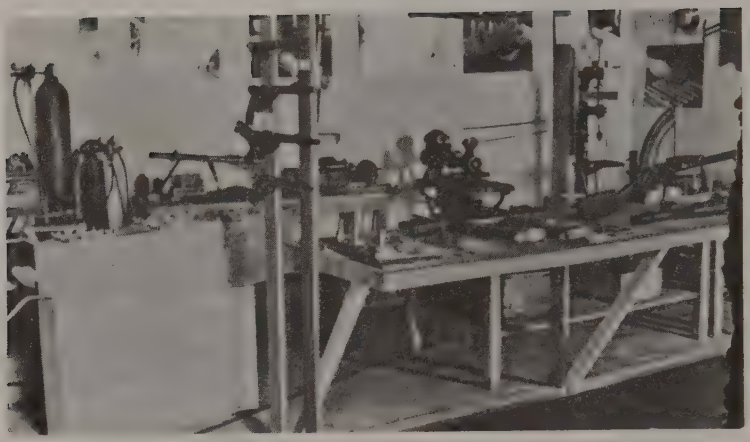
CREDIT: Maj. Richard Keogh
Very excellent Schnellfeuer copy, with more attention to fit, finish, and detail than many original production models.



CREDIT: R. L. Hermann Asiatic copy of Mauser Broomhandle

CREDIT: Tom Nelson

Group of Chinese Nationalist copies: TOP-Model 38, Sten type; MIDDLE-Model 37, M3A1 lookalike; BOTTOM-Model 36, M3A1 submachine gun.

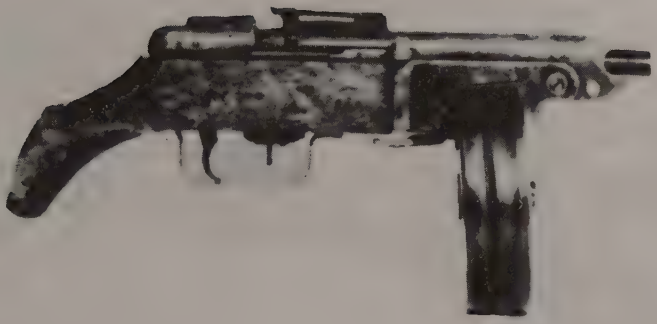


CREDIT: Norwegian Resistance Museum

Guerilla troops needed arms, and Norwegians made them in small shops like this one, which turned out copies of British Sten guns, etc.

CREDIT: Norges Hjemmefrontmuseum

Testing a homemade Sten gun during WWII in Norway, a resistance armourer fires it in to a silencing target device in his shop. Note racks of parts for the shop-produced Stens.

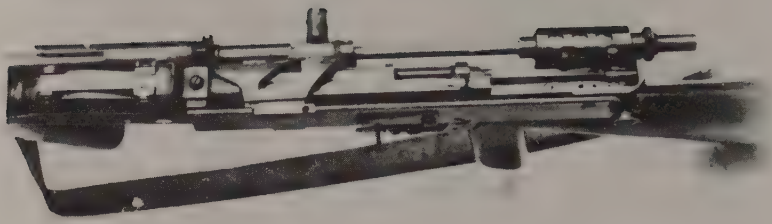


CREDIT: Bundesarchiv

A modified Soviet PPD, model of 1940, was cut down and used by Finnish guerillas against the Russians in late 1940 and inot 1941.

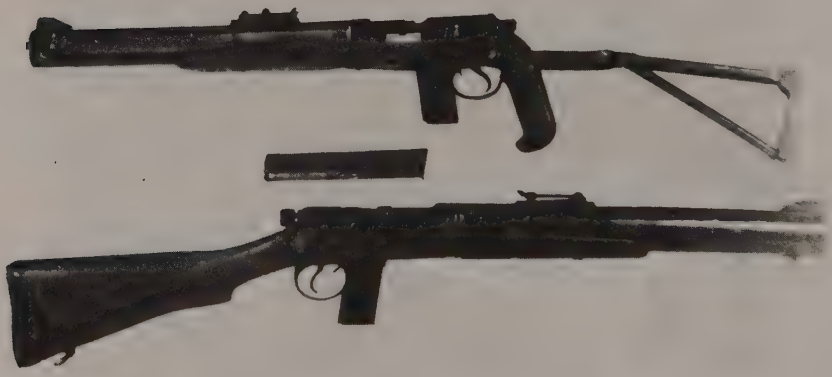
CREDIT: Danish Resistance Museum

This smoothly produced submachine gun is a product of Danish underground gunshops of WWII resistance.



CREDIT: John Minnery

The Charlton semi-automatic rifle modified the No. 1, Mk 2 rifle and Mark 3 Short Magazine Lee Enfield into an emergency use automatic rifle designed for widespread conversion as a defense weapon. The cheap, simple manufacture of submachine guns caused this program to be dropped.



CREDIT: Fairways Corporation

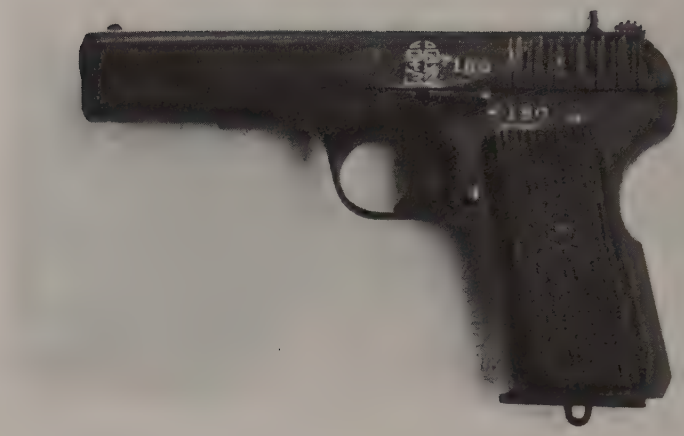
Two styles of the DeLisle carbine, Model One — a short range, silenced, special mission weapon.

CREDIT: Maj. Richard Keogh

Chinese copy of the M1911A1 pistol. This well-made version is marked "PITTSBURG MADE IN USA" on the left side of the slide.

CREDIT: Don Crews Collection

Sugiura 8mm pistol, serial No. 2835.



CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh

Chinese copy of the 1930 33 Soviet Tokarev pistol. This one was produced in 1943.

CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh

Note slot for attachement of stock in this Chinese copy of the Tokarev pistol.

CREDIT: Larry Sterett

Ensign Iliff D. Richardson, USN, at a jungle camp on Leyte with his Philippine guerrilla shotgun.

CREDIT: Golden State Arms

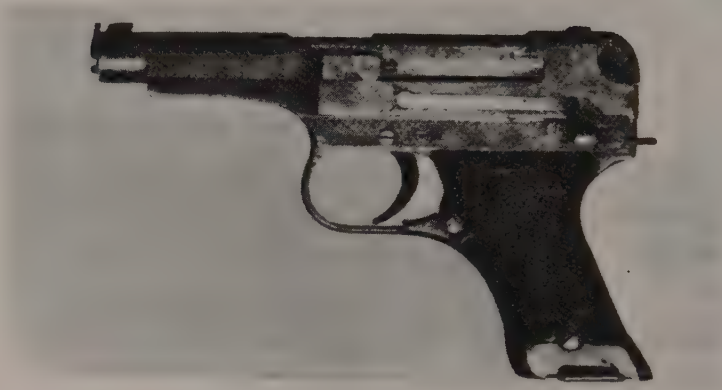
This 12 gauge Philippine percussion shotgun, probably dating to pre-WWII days, uses a French musket barrel in its construction. Used in guerilla combat, this weapon was sold to a collector for just $30 in the late '50s.

CREDIT: Richardson Industries

The "domestic" model of the Philippine guerilla shotgun, offered in 1946 as a sporting weapon.

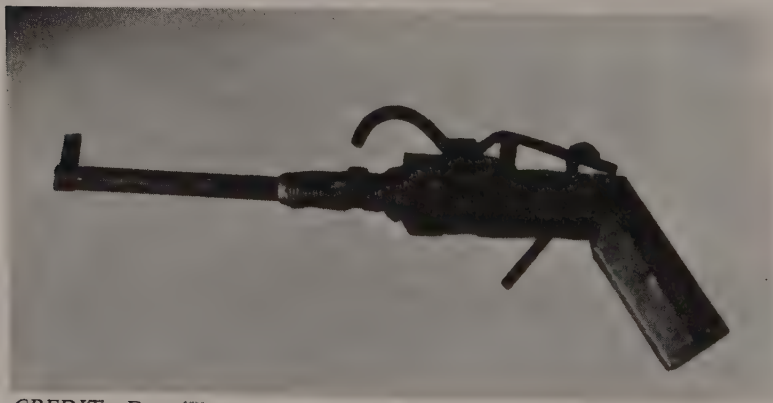
CREDIT: Don Thomas

Japanese "shop-crafted" home defense rifle in 7.7mm, a last ditch civilian defense firearm in 1945.



CREDIT: Dr. W. R. Funderburg, courtesy of Ray Riling

The so-called Japanese "Suicide Pistol" of WWII infame.



CREDIT: Don Thomas

The Japanese National Defense Pistol was a crude, home-shop affair dreamed up in 1945 to "repel" the allies from the home island.

CREDIT: National Air Communications Corp.

Resistance fighters examine the products of Danish "home" gun factories . . . their own firearms produced on the spot for the war.

PHOTO CREDIT: HM1 Francis Brown, USN

Petty Officer T. E. Snowden, USN, poses with Chinese copy of Sten gun. This is the silenced model refined by the Chinese.

CREDIT: Col. G. B. Jarrett

The German "Gerat Potsdam" copy of the Sten is an identical copy of the British weapon, used in Battle of Bulge by Skorzeny's commandoes.

CREDIT: Israeli Defense Forces Archives

An orthodox member of the *Irgun* on guard in Jerusalem in 1948. He is armed with a Chinese copy of the Mauser machine pistol.

CREDIT: U. S. Army Photo

This Thompson submachine gun is an Egyptian copy whose major differing feature is poor workmanship. The copier started with an Auto Ordnance barrel, and went downward from there. However, it fired well enough for its user to evade capture for about 1/6th of the 1967 Arab Israeli war. Never been fired, dropped in the sand once...

CREDIT: Pakistan Ministry of Information

This Beretta Model 38/44 was recovered during the 1971 fighting in Pakistan. The barrel and stock were cut, and a crude handgrip fastened on. Records indicate the weapon once belonged to the Indian military services.

CREDIT: Aberdeen Proving Ground

Simple stamped pistol was tested toward the end of the Second World War for possible use by resistance groups. It was designed so production was possible in underground workshops.

CREDIT: Danish Resistance Museum

Improvised submachine gun used by the Danish resistance members during WWII.

CREDIT: Don Stoehr

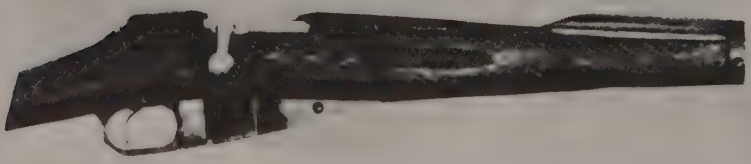
The VGI-5, stripped.

CREDIT: U.S. Army

Close Japanese copy of the Pedersen semi-auto rifle. According to Julian Hatcher, American ordnance expert, only two of these were made.

CREDIT: Peter Ecyk

Intelligence officer examines partisan weapons in Denmark, including homemade Sten gun and an unknown design in his right hand.



CREDIT: Finland Defense Information Office

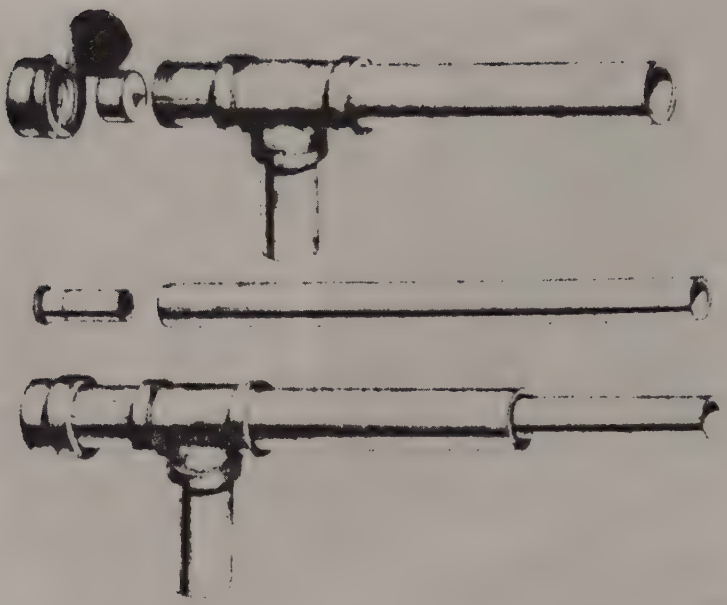
A Finnish model 28-30 rifle, this weapon was used by Resistance fighters in 1939 to 1940.

CREDIT: David Drummond

Kenya Police Special Branch's group of "Pseudo-Terrorists," highly trained officers working as a phoney "gang" to stop Mau Mau terrorism. Officer at left has homemade Mau Mau weapon — others carried Sterling submachine guns under their robes. Note girl member, second from left.

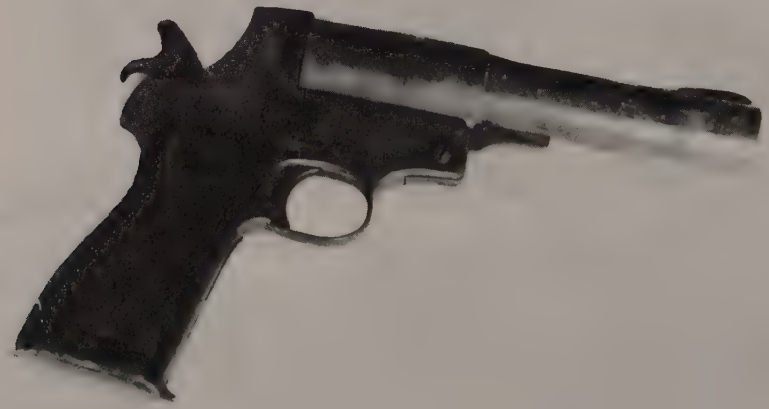
CREDIT: Dennis Holman

Homemade guns captured from Mau Mau. These were made from gas piping and sections of bicycle frames.



CREDIT: U. S. Army

Sketch of a water-pipe shotgun, types of which were recovered by military authorities during civil riots of the late '60s.

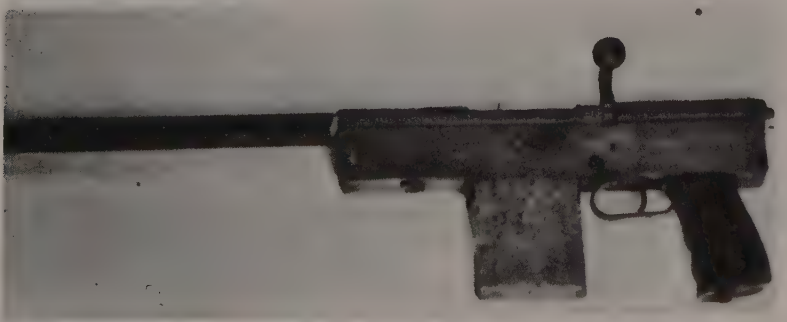


CREDIT: Maj. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, Philippine Constabulary

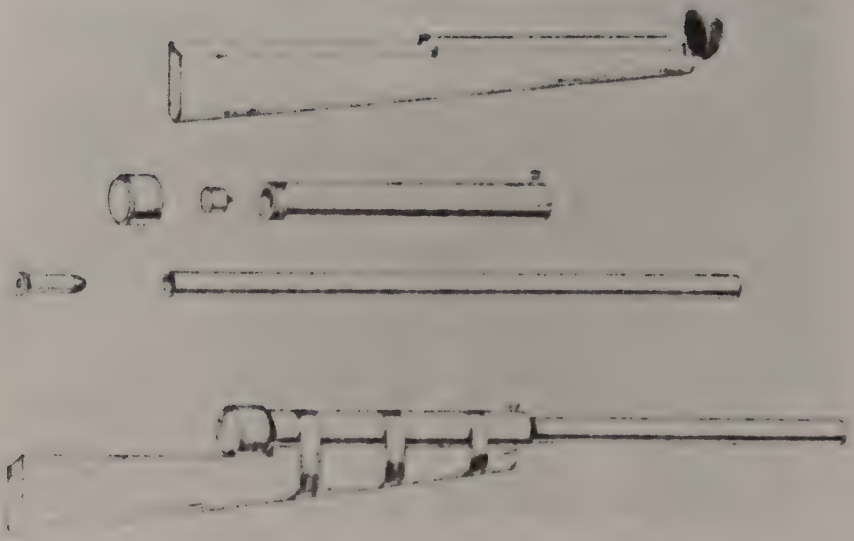
This pistol, although a Paltic device, was produced in some quantity, and used throughout the Philippines in the early '70s, especially among terrorists. It was also popular as a legally licensed self-defense weapon among the ruling class. The reason for its popularity among all was the fact that it is a 12 gauge shot pistol, firing buckshot!

CREDIT: National Museum of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Tamil rebel was driven from the Malaysian jungles by British and native troops. Note his improvised rifle.

CREDIT: Pattern Room, RSAF, enfield
A Beretta 38 44 submachine gun modified by the E.O.K.A. rebels in Cyprus. The butt was cut, and a Bren carrying handle was used as a vertical foregrip.



CREDIT: Lt. Col. D.C. Villanueva, A.F.P.
A village-made, terrorist-used 20 gauge shotgun using a magazine feed system.



CREDIT: U. S. Army

Improvised rifle as used by the Viet Cong, then later adapted from instructions in official U.S. government publications to the domestic revolution.

CREDIT: Africapix

British Special Branch officer studies a homemade pistol, with a jungle workshop carbine lying on the mat beneath him. The other items are Mau Mau oathing paraphernalia. Photo taken near Nairobi in 1952.

CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, Armed Forces of the Philippines

Shotgun, homemade by the Muslim rebels during the 1973 outbreaks, known as Paltic weapons. This 20 gauge weapon has a revolving cylinder with a five-shot capacity.

CREDIT: David Drummond

Kenya police's ''Pseudo Gang'' after gun battle with the real thing. Note both modern and homemade weapons. The police ''gang'' was an early equal opportunity employer, using a female in combat.

It is not pro-American to pay barbaric tribute before the shrine of anti-Communism in Southeast Asia by sacrificing 55,000 young men there. Neither is it pro-American to pay tribute in the amount of hundreds of billions of dollars before false altars of savagery there.

— L. Fletcher Prouty
Cia liaison officer

And, Vietnam!

In a 1964 article in GUNS & AMMO, John Wootters describes a homemade rifle liberated by a U.S. Marine Captain in the Mekong Delta.

> *The man who built this weapon did it, working with nothing but a hacksaw, file, drill, some sort of whittling instrument, and a charcoal forge. He did it with materials any trained gunsmith would laugh out loud at . . . There is no steel anywhere in the weapon, and the maker's ingenuity was such that it is assembled entirely without the use of welding, brazing, soldering, threading, or machine screws.*
>
> *Because he needed a gun, this primitive craftsman succeeded in creating a bolt-action shoulder arm capable of being fired with powerful military ammunition. The result may appear to be laughable, until you consider his handicaps — and his purposes.*

Mr. Wootters says the basic design was influenced by the Japanese Model 38 Arisaka rifle, plus features from the many Chinese Mauser copies.

In the same issue, Buz Fawcett presented a pictorial potpourri of captured VC weapons, including jungle workshop copies of the U.S. Springfield '03 rifle, the British Enfield Mk4, German Mauser in 7.92mm, U.S. M1 Carbine, French 8mm Lebel, plus a very skillful copy of a Mannlicher action used on a homemade rifle.

According to Major Keogh, homemade VC guns were common in Vietnam up to 1965 or 1966, after which huge supplies of AK-47s, its modernized version, the SKM, and other foreign issue weapons started turning up. From that point on, only the ragged, younger guerrilla soldiers carried the copies and jungle workshop firearms. The others had better weapons.

Or, as Major Koegh pointed out, only partly in jest, "It got so bad they sometimes outgunned us!"

Agreeing, CWo4 Thomas Swearengen, USMC ordnance authority, says the big production years for the village gunshops were from the Viet Minh era through 1965 1966. From that point,

enough Soviet, Chinese, and captured U.S. weapons became available to all but the poorest guerrilla groups.

"About the only small arms produced after that were a few special mission weapons, such as sanitized pieces, assassination guns, and some booby-trapped weapons to catch sourvenir hunting American troops," Tom Swearengen recalled.

One of the gunsmithing problems often overlooked was explained by Swearengen, "The VC had a heckuva time fitting the U.S. inch threads into the metric system their stuff used. Most of their lathes and other equipment — French, Soviet, German, etc. — was metric, while our heat-treated gun parts were all on the inch system."

Usually, a VC guerrilla used the improvised weapon only until he got a better one, i.e., captured or liberated an issue firearm. Then, he passed his older weapon on to a younger comrade.

A Chinese manufactured version of the Gewehr 88, an 8mm German Army rifle, turned up in Vietnam in 1963, brought back to this country by a "civilian" military advisor who had been on contract with the Central Intelligence Agency. The weapon had a five-shot capacity. Reports also have this weapon produced in China in 11mm as well.

ARVN troops liberated a smoothbore percussion piece in 1966. Later examination showed it had been built only a few years before. Constructed in a village shop with a forge and hand tools, the weapon's workmanship was crude. Heavy at 9 pounds, the weapon used slugs cast of lead and black powder, just as its antique predecessers did. The lock was of a homemade percussion type, and the weapon uses open sights. Estimated effective range for this heavy-calibre weapon is 75 meters.

One captured VC weapon with a pipe barrel has a pivotal breech-block operating the same as a trap door hinge. According to experts who saw the gun, it uses a pinfire cartridge system — a very old manner of weaponry.

Several of the VC shotgun designs use the standard pipe barrel and 2x4 stock design, but several have actions which demonstrate that the jungle gunsmiths either had some knowledge of the Lee-Metford and Lee-Enfield plans, or are design geniuses on their own.

Noting that ammunitionfor a rifle of 1874 vintage might be hard to locate in the jungles, VC ordnance officers cut down French Gras rifles they had, and altered the chamber to accept .410 gauge shot shells. They also shortened the stock to fit the smaller-limbed Vietnamese soldier. In addition to making guns, jungle workshops also modified them.

Special Forces vet Fred Rexer, Jr. took part in long range reconnaisance patrols making probing missions into Cambodia and Laos from 1966 through 1968. He reports they discovered very sophisticated weapons shops in production and in use, noting "they were both manufacturing and improvising weapons there for Communist forces in the South."

Now a Class III arms dealer in Texas, Mr. Rexler writes, "Most of these arsenals consisted of a foreman and several youthful apprentices who were village kids or combatants recovering from wounds."

He said the foreman was in charge of supervising the workers, and that the mission of these workshops was to repair weapons, to manufacture weapons from various parts and other supplies, and to improvise weapons from miscellaneous materials.

Although Rexer described the improvisations as "sometimes creative," he said most of the arsenals were "manualized," using rote labor to assemble parts. Commenting, he told about Frenchmen who were captives in North Vietnam after Dien Bien Phu calling their captives "ants" because each one seemed so autonomously concerned about his job, never asking questions.

According to CW04 Swearengen, there were literally hundreds of jungle gunshops all over South Vietnam. He reports, "They made every conceivable type of ordnance in these shops. And, in some cases the workmanship was really excellent, but in almost all cases it was at least functional."

Further, the studious Swearengen, who has been an expert witness for the military as well as the BATF, added, "Much of the ordnance material was indigenous, except for what they captured. The homemade guns usually didn't last too long because they were not heat treated and were usually made from soft metals."

He noted with some irony that these workshop weapons "lasted long enough and shot well enough for the VC user to obtain a better weapon from some poor ARVN troop."

Agreeing with Swearengen, former Army NCO Thomas Cooper recalls his experience with jungle weapons' shops during Long Range Recon missions in SE Asia, "Most of these bush gunsmiths took great pride in these homebuilt weapons, even if the gun's life was only one or two shots. That was enough to kill or spook some ARVN people and to get one of our weapons from them."

Swearengen adds, "After the VC got the captured carbine or M16, he passed along the homemade weapon, if it still worked, to another guerilla. If it didn't work, they sent it back to another workshop to make a 'new' gun."

There is a history of these home workshops and guerrilla wars in that area. Prior to the dictatorship of the Diem family government, which at least established a central military, there were varied groups with their own private armies. The best known of these groups in terms of weapon copying is the Cao Dai, located in the Mekong Delta. Two of their classic works are copies of the M1911A1 and the FN Browning pistol, about which ordnance experts complimented the craftsmanship, but questioned the metallurgy.

Of course, there were hundreds of other gun copiers in post-war Indochina, especially during the fighting against the French and left over for the continuing action against the U.S. Some of the earliest weapons captured by U.S. troops included the basic framework of the French MAS rifle, 1936 vintage. Often, original barrels of these improvised rifles were replaced with pipe, a ''new'' bolt was hand-hammered from a hunk of iron or modified from another type of rifle, while the stock was often a hand-carved piece of GI 2x4. Other VC weapons included Arisaka and Mauser rifles with modifications.

In late 1967, one ex-Green Beret told of capturing a WWII vintage M1 Garand rifle that had been shot so often its bore was worn smooth. The action no longer functioned semiautomatically, and the weapon had been fitted with an oversized cocking handle on the bolt, making the weapon a bolt action rifle.

One VC copy put into ''production'' was a bolt-action version of the U.S. M1 carbine, using regular carbine ammunition and issue magazines. While most of the carbine copies were smoothbore, a few were captured which had standard U.S. carbine barrels incorporated into the building of the homemade version.

Another American weapon modified by the Viet Cong was reported by Joe Maggio, a good soldier who had to settle for being a CIA contract agent when he got wiped out of their regular Ivy League training cycle because he wasn't cut from their kookie cutter. Joe, who did the combat bit both in and out of uniform, reported the Viet Cong altered captured M14 rifles to sometimes a better job than the factory assembly line turned out. There are other stories from less esoteric warriors than Joe, who saw the M14 doing better things with the local improvements than when it left the U.S.

The clever Vietnamese also took samples of captured .45 M1911A1 pistols and soon produced copies from their various workshops. On many examples the workmanship is hurried, primitive and crude by the machine-shiny U.S. government's standards — but, the VC copies kill. One such copy was described by M Sgt. John P. Wilson of the U.S. Special Forces, as ''looking

absurd from rough manufacture and hard use, but unimpaired in deadly effectiveness.''

Another copy of the M1911A1 was captured during action by a PRU (Provincial Reconnaisance Unit) patrol on Dung Island in the Mekong Delta. A 9mm pistol, bearing serial No. 568001, was recovered by Lt. (jg) Stephen Brannan, and was later identified by Lt. Cyril Vetter, an intelligence officer, as being of Chinese or North Vietnamese manufacture. This weapon was apparently handmade. Although it was captured in 1969, it had seen service long before that.

One collector reports seeing an Asian copy of the .45 M1911 Colt at a domestic gun show in 1965. The weapon was the usual laminated and brazed construction, and its country of origin was given as North Korea. In addition to village workshop manufacture, some regular U.S. production parts were used, and were obviously of higher quality than the copied portions of the weapon.

An unusual variation of the M1911A1 copies was reported by Dick Keogh in the July 1970 issue of AUTO MAG. Captured near Can-Tho in 1967, the weapon was probably produced near Ray Ninh, an area once the stronghold of the Cao Dai sect — well known for their village gunshops which turned out many copies of existing firearms. However, in 1956, the Cao Dai, their private army and own gunsmiths were forcefully integrated into the South Vietnamese national army. Of course, many of their products remain, as this Colt copy testifies.

According to Major Keogh, the workmanship on this piece was rough, but the service life of the weapon would probably be enough for the few rounds needed for self defense or to obtain another, production firearm. Many of the external safeties appear on the pistol but, none are functional. Also, the weapon is of straight blowback operation despite the presence of a link to pull the rear of the barrel down. All components showed brazed joints and the finish was roughly blued. Evaluating the piece, Major Keogh observes in his article, ''The fantastic number of manhours that went into such a pistol must have limited their issue to important officials who would need such a weapon more for prestige than for combat.''

There were other copied pistols designed for the Communist officialdom. According to Richard Hermann, village arsenals in North Vietnam also turned out copies of the Soviet Tokarev pistol for use in the South by guerrilla officers.

In addition to copied pistols, at least one VC arsenal turned out a pipe 'n stock handgun which fired automatically, functioning as a

machine pistol. Former Marine Leroy Smith recalls seeing one of these weapons late in 1963.

Another "submachine gun without the magazine," was reported by Special Forces troops in 1964, when a 9mm homemade "pistol" was captured. This blowback weapon was simply a piece of thick-walled tubing attached to a carved pistol stock, with a crude magazine which jammed the gun frequently.

In addition, the Viet Cong had several wire-handle pistols, usually very flimsy affairs whose service life was only a few rounds. The captive weapons included 9mm and .32 calibre models. Although machined, according to former Army troops with combat experience in Central Park and Watts, these weapons were inferior to many domestic zip guns.

There were also a variety of more normal-looking submachine guns turned out by "factories" in both South and North Vietnam. Most are stamped semi-copies of existing designs, using easily obtained materials.

In "borrowing" other designs, the Vietnamese Communists also used some of the finer submachine guns already available, e.g., the U.S. M3 and the British Sten. Since both the OSS and the British SOE sent large numbers of Sten guns to the Pacific during WWII, and since the various Sten models are probably the world's most produced submachine gun, it is no shock that many modified versions of these weapons are still spewing death in Indochina. In several cases, the Viet Cong weapons use both Sten parts and jungle-built original pieces, as many of the weapons are made with bottom-attaching magazines, etc.

Another favorite of the Viet Cong irregulars is the French MAT-49, which they modified, primarily, by replacing the 9mm barrel, magazine, and action with 7.62mm components so the weapon is converted to the Soviet 7.62mm Type P cartridge. The barrel is slightly longer on this modified version.

And, in what has to be a real nostalgia job, one of the favorite — and best — submachine guns of another era recently turned up in Vietnam when U.S. forces captured what appeared to be a Beretta Model 12 submachine gun near Tay Ninh. This was late in 1972. However, an ordnance specialist identified it as a copy of the Italian weapon, produced, probably, in Indonesia.

Another classic the Vietnamese have honored by duplication is the Thompson M1928, a favorite weapon of our native allies in that theater during WWII. Most of the homebuilt Thompsons captured in Vietnam are crude, but effective, affairs made in jungle gunshops.

Several photographed for this book included the following modifications: The Cutts compensator is omitted; sling sweivels are on the left side; the barrel is shortened; and the finish looks like hell. But, in combat —

Several captive models show evidence of Chinese manufacture. These feature a wooden pistol grip rather than the foregrip and have no sling swivels. These weapons appear to have been copied from the M1921 Thompson.

Commenting on the copied Thompsons, Granville Rideout notes, "The greatest interest in this piece is the tremendous amount of labor involved in producing an inferior weapon." Probably quite true, but we wonder how many dead persons who stood in front of these crude, inferior guns felt that way as their life left?"

One expert who examined and tested the Viet Cong copy of the Soviet PPSH, known as the Chicom Type 50, was former Special Forces veteran Frank C. Moyer, now with the BATF. He reports that these modified weapons started showing up in Vietnam early in 1966, and he recalls recovering them regularly through 1968.

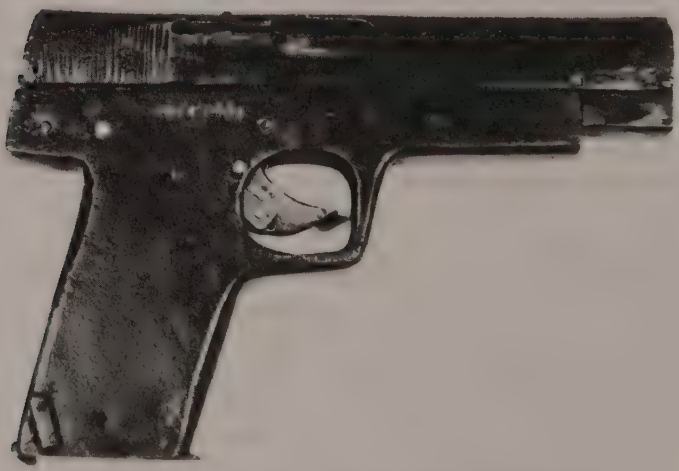
"I examined a lot of these," Frank writes, "and all the work was factory professional. Our intelligence people say the work was done in factories up North."

Bascially, he added, the VC model was lighter, more compact with telescoped stock, and easier to handle than the original Type 50 submachine gun or the forerunner of both — the PPSH. The Vietnmese used the basic Type 50 weapon, the modified each with factory machining, plus adding various parts from Soviet target rifles, the AK-47, and the French MAT-49.

He concludes, "It was an altogether a nice example of jungle 'factory' modification of existing weapons and assorted parts which they had available to make a gun more suited to the people using it and to the terrain it was used in."

CREDIT: National Air Communications Corp.

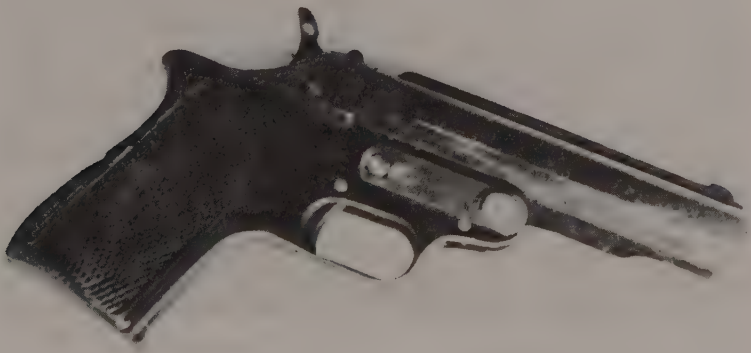
This rare photo was liberated from a dead VC agent. It shows a worker in one of the jungle gunshops run by the North Vietnamese on both sides of the border.



CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh, courtesy of AUTO MAG
This 9mm homemade pistol was captured near Can-Tho in the Mekong Delta in 1967, where it was carried by a Viet Cong political officer.

CREDIT: Richard Gott

Albino Guzman, guerrilla in Luis de la Puente's band, fighting in Peru, against CIA-directed government forces. His rifle is an improvisation of parts with a homemade barrel.

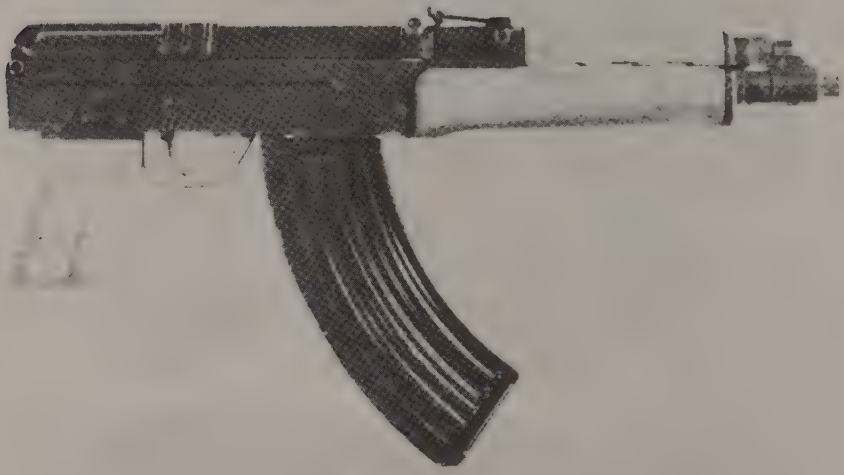


CREDIT: Maj. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, Philippine Constabulary

Several of these .410 gauge, single shot pistols were liberated during a round-up of political terrorists in the Provinces.

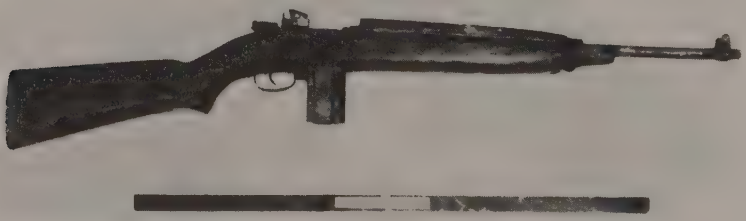
CREDIT: U. S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center

The Viet Cong took the French 11mm, Model 1874 Gras rifle and altered it to their people in their terrain. This one in .410, others have been seen in 12 ga.



CREDIT: CPT. Thomas Curtis

A greatly modified Czech Model 58 assault rifle in 7.62mm was liberated in Vietnam in the middle '60s.



CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

The U.S. M1 carbine, a favorite of the South Vietnamese, has also been copied by the Viet Cong. This VC-manufactured carbine was captured by Marines in South Vietnam.

CREDIT: U. S. Army

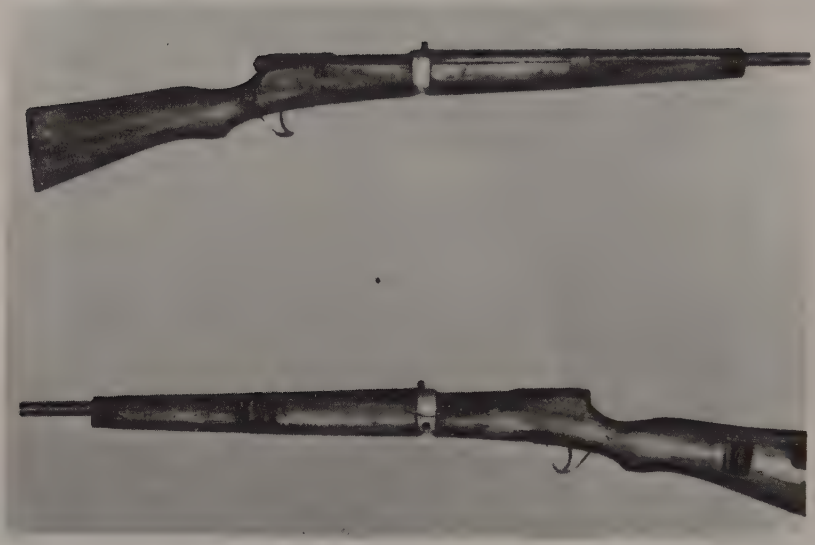
A classic Asiatic copy — one of the Cao Dai weapons made in S. Vietnam. This one is an excellent reproduction of the FN Browning Hi-Power pistol in 9mm.

CREDIT: U. S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center

Another original design of the Viet Cong — a pinfire shotgun.

CREDIT: U. S. Information Agency

A Vietnamese outpost commander poses with some VC weapons captured in a raided camp. Among the weapons were a modified ChiCom submachine gun, 4 issue M1 carbines, plus two copies from VC gunshops.

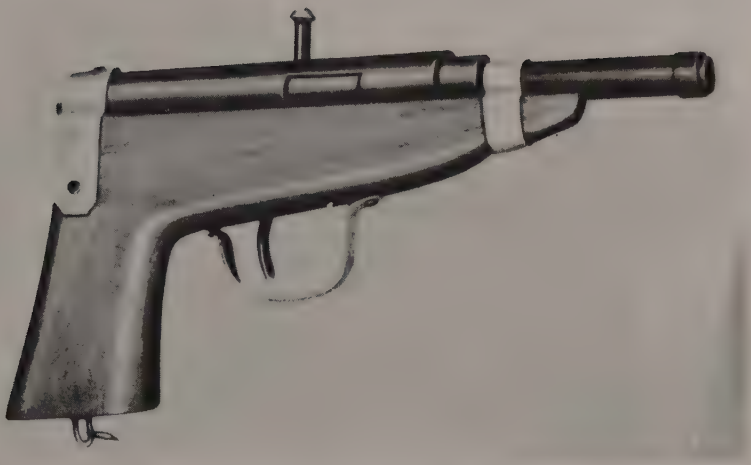


CREDIT: John Wootters

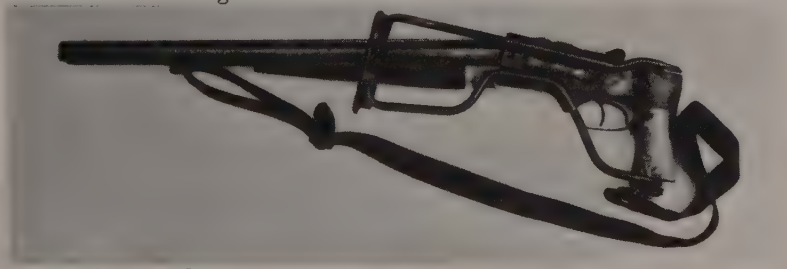
Two views of the John Wootters Viet Cong homemade rifle.

CREDIT: John Wootters

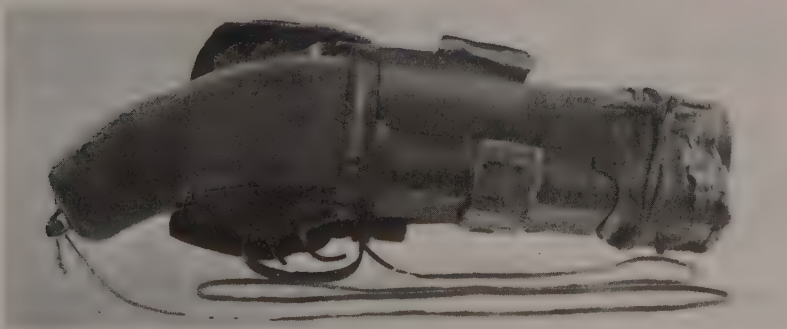
Showing the bolt and receiver of the VC homemade rifle described by writer John Wootters.



CREDIT: U. S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center
This is a blowback pistol, made of mostly wood and scrap by the Viet Cong. It fires a 9mm cartridge.



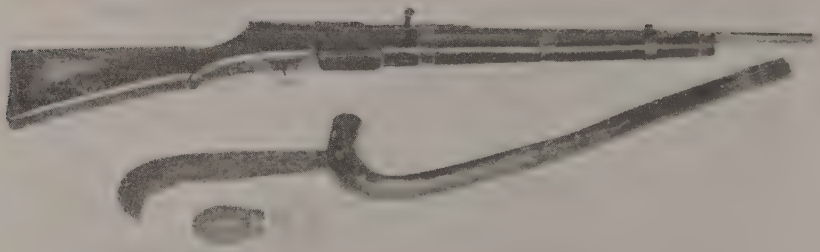
CREDIT: Tom Swearengen
This Belgian shotgun was modified by the Viet Cong for combat use by cutting the barrels back to 18 inches, adding a pistol grip, and an M1A1 folding carbine stock.



CREDIT: Tom Swearengen
Viet Cong modified this captured M79 grenade launcher by cutting back on the barrel and stock greatly. Recaptured from the VC by US Marines, this weapon was tested and found to be as effective as its issue-sized brothers.

CREDIT: United Press International

Viet Cong flag and weapons captured at Trang Bang, 35 miles NW of Saigon. A number of homemade rifles and modified existing small arms were captured in this arms cache by ARVN troops.



CREDIT: U. S. Army Photo

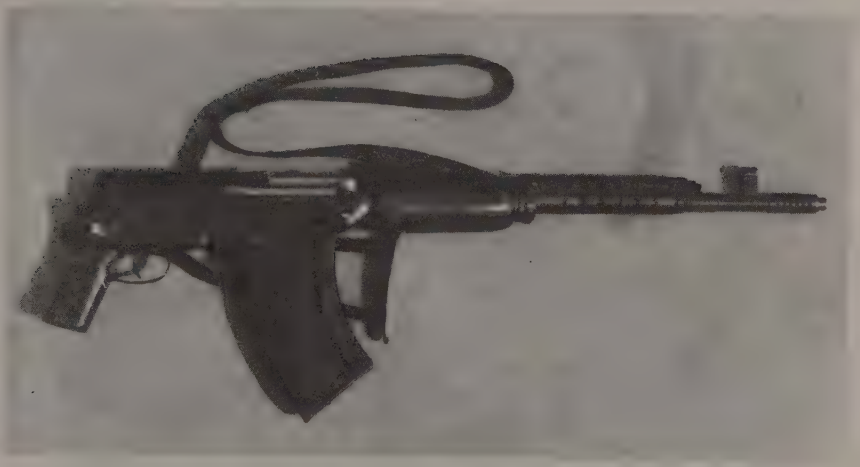
A complete homemade rifle firing the .30 carbine cartridge as used by a Viet Cong scout. Captured in the Central Highlands in 1965. He also carried a woodchopper's axe and French hand grenades.

CREDIT: Granville Rideout

This homemade Viet Cong weapon is a .60 calibre, smoothbore percussion rifle — using powder and ball.

CREDIT: U. S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center

Again using the successful design of another of the major powers, the Viet Cong modified the M1917 Enfield rifle to their own use.



CREDIT: John A. Minnery

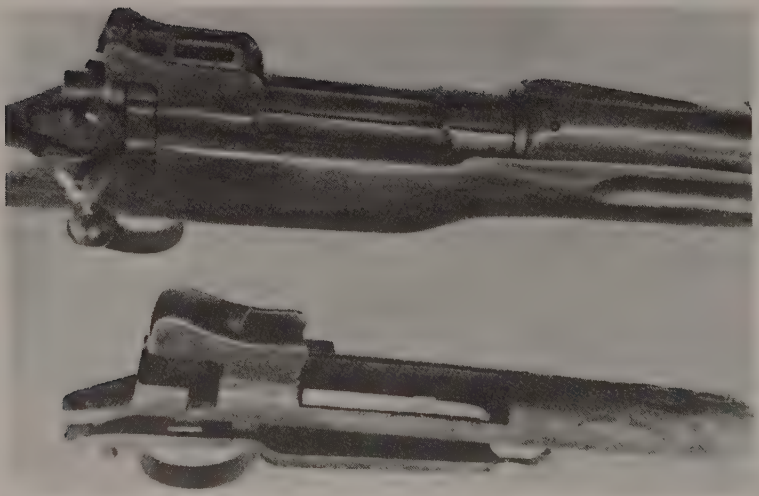
The Viet Cong made this .303 calibre version of the AK-47 from parts of downed U.S. aircraft, plus other scrounged materials, including a Bren magazine.

CREDIT: U. S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center

Another ancient weapon converted by the Viet Cong is the modified Mannlicher-Berthier rifle.

CREDIT: U. S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center

A wholly homemade design — a Viet Cong pipe, pins, and wire pistol in 9mm.



CREDIT: John Wootters

Another comparison of Viet Cong gun and original — Top is an Enfield Rifle of WWI fame, while the bottom receiver is the Viet Cong copy of the Enfield.

CREDIT: Agency for International Development

A simple smoothbore weapon of Viet Cong manufacture, probably made in a home shop from spare parts of other weapons and scrap materials.

CREDIT: U. S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center

Another example of homemade Vietnamese shotgun.

CREDIT: U. S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center

This is a Viet Cong submachine gun of more original design and construction. However, it is still one of their jungle workshop weapons.

CREDIT: U. S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center

This Viet Cong submachine gun was recovered during hostile action, and follows many of the qualities of the original design — the Sten gun of British Commonwealth fame.

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Improvised Modified Firearms

Deadly Homemade Weapons

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ABOUT THIS BOOK....

When Minnery and Truby teamed to do a book on improvised and modified firearms, Peder Lund told them it would be a modest effort that would be of some interest to law enforcement agency libraries and a few technically-minded collectors. He was wrong. Judging from the reaction to that book, this second volume became obligatory, and the mail is still coming in.

There was simply too much material for one volume, and with the initial book in print, persons all over the world have contributed new pictures, information, and case histories for the authors.

Basically, this volume is an update of what we published in the initial book. In addition, we have included two chapters related to improvised modified firearms in two areas we had not considered in the first book — espionage and silencers.

This book contains many, many more photos than the first one — a request made by readers. In addition, the authors are literally traveling the world gathering new data for a third and perhaps fourth volume.

We would like your help, too. If you have any information, data, photos, sketches, or anything related to improvised or modified firearms that you would like to share with us for publication, please send to:

Mr. Peder Lund
PALADIN PRESS
Box 1307
Boulder, Colorado 80302
c/o IMP MOD BOOKS

Your material will be included in future volumes, along with the appropriate credits, fame, etc., unless you want to remain unnamed, which is perfectly all right with us. We understand.

These books on improvised modified firearms are truly "By Request."

Here's the latest.....

J. David Truby
Pennsylvania, USA
April 1975

John A. Minnery
Ontario, Canada
April 1975

CHAPTER 1 AN UPDATE . . .

The first volume in this series contained 7 chapters of information on the history and development of improvised and modified firearms, ranging from zip guns to sophisticated assassination weapons designed in Vietnam.

This book is an effort to catch up with the state of the art that we missed in the first effort. This book includes material sent in by readers of the first book, plus the results of investigation by the authors.

We are presenting the material in just three chapters this time, with most of the space being used for illustration — at your request.

Meantime, back on the street, where those zip guns of the '50s are just as deadly today, a member of the New York Police Department's Ballistics Squad estimates that that city's PD seizes an average of 35 to 40 homemade zip guns each week. This amount is a small percentage of what is available, as he says the vast majority made go totally undetected until used.

A batch of zip guns turned up in Newmarket, near Toronto, recently. Sergeants Robert Burbidge and William Hill of the local police, explained the guns were made from pieces of pipe in which a firecracker and a glass marble are loaded. The firecracker furnished the ignition and propulsion, the officers explained, which had enough force to drive the marble through the side of a steel drum.

Also, Canadian police at Kitchener seized three zip guns — two 12 gauge shotguns and a .22 calibre rifle. According to Deputy Chief Ewan Cameron, "These are dangerous weapons capable of blowing off the head of a person standing in front of them or firing them."

The trio of weapons, taken from three teenagers, had wooden stocks, pipe barrels, and firing mechanisms made of rubber bands and nails.

In November of 1974, a Toronto newspaper reporter, Peter Mosher, told how he bought a converted .22 pengun on a city street for $3.79. Mr. Mosher said he bought the weapon very easily and very openly.

Earlier, Dr. Morton Shulman, a member of Parliament, had his wife purchase a .22 calibre pengun for five dollars. The guns were being sold in a novelty shop whose owner estimated he had sold about 400 weapons in a four month period. He claimed, "These shoot only blanks."

Dr. Shulman took the Italian-made gun home and easily converted it to fire a .22 long rifle cartridge. The bullet passed through a 3 4

inch piece of plywood and put a hole in his basement wall. During later hearings in the Ontario capital, he testified he had seen the store sell these guns to youngsters in the 8 to 10 year age group.

As this book is written, Dr. Shulman is trying to draft legislation to prevent the sale of the weapons. He says, ''Presently, these may be legally sold as they are not guns in the strict sense. But, it takes only a few moments of work, then they sure as hell are deadly guns.''

Commenting on the imported penguns, John Mallard of the Metro Toronto Police firearms unit, said a user would have to be ''crazy'' to use one of the guns.

''We've tried them in the lab and they simply are not safe with live loads. Of course, they will fire, but they aren't ballistically strong enough to handle the pressures. These things could easily explode on any shot,'' Lt. Mallard said.

Continuing, he added, ''These damn things have blown up on us during testing. They're dangerous from either end.''

Penguns have showed up in the home shops of India's Ky Khyber Pass area as well. Nicholas Paterson reports seeing a rather crude copy of a standard pengun design in .22 calibre during his visits to a series of ''gunshops'' in a village named Kohat. He also saw a cane gun there, in .32 calibre, with an ivory handle, a barrel-tip plug, and a very cunningly retractable trigger.

A Mattel ''Shooting Shell'' revolver was converted by a hold up man who used the altered .22 revolver in a gas station robbery in Buffalo. No respecter of international borders, the man and his deadly toy showed up next in Montreal where ''they'' tried a bank. Police captured the man and his gun.

According to Bruce B. Koffler, director of Canada's Research Council on Civil Disorders, the conversion had a fitted firing pin with six barrel tubes soldered into the ''shooting shell'' chambers. The barrel tubes were .22 calibre.

Most North American makers of blank firing devices recognize people may try to convert their product to live firing condition and use a variety of built-in safeguards. Not so for many of the cheap imports from South America, Spain, Italy, and Germany. Police firearms experts who've seen and tested hundreds of these converted cheapies offer one concensus: *Don't!*

''I don't say that from a legal sense as much as a safety plea,'' comments Lt. Joseph Bogan seriously. ''Many more persons are hurt accidentally with these conversions than are shot purposefully,'' he adds.

''I've seen them made from metal casings of such poor quality that I would hesitate to fire even blanks in them,'' says this weapons

expert from the Liberty Borough (Pennsylvania) police.

A conversion was done with a Czechoslovakian made blank pistol which is designed to look like an automatic. Actually, it uses a small, square magazine holding four blanks. According to ballistics expert Bruce B. Koffler, it is easily converted to hold four live cartridges. After the barrel and magazine are altered, it will fire the live ammunition safely and easily.

One quality import which can be rather easily altered is the Perfecta from Germany. This unusual blank gun fires from a tubular magazine.

Another import which can be altered is known as the Gecado pistol, a tiny automatic-appearing device about the size of a .25 calibre pocket pistol. Although the weapon holds six blank cartridges, only one live projectile may be used.

Ironically, though, one of the most difficult conversions is from one of the cheapest of the so-called "starter's pistol" or blank-firing guns. This one is the German H-S single shot design which sells for about $2. According to most experts the design is almost impossible to convert to live firing condition.

According to our mail, do it yourselfers are still making guns, despite increased police pressure.

On the surface, though, not all "do it yourself" firearms are intended for the use of terrorists and criminals. According to "designers", most are made purely for the reward of putting together your own gun and shooting it.

In 1972, an outfit known as JACO Designs sold instructions and plans for a quartet of simple, easily made handguns. The pistols were designed for both making and shooting, but the company's plans carried none of the usual terrorist rhetoric which infects the technical data of most do-it-yourself gunmakers directions. Instead, these seem to be harmless "kits." Wether they would be classed as legal kits, though, is a BATF matter.

One of the four guns is a "Pioneer Pistol," a .22 or a .31 calibre cap 'n ball revolver; one is a .22 single shot pistol; the third is a single shot using .22 short ammunition. This tiny model is called a Minipistol. The fourth design is for a .22 calibre single shot derringer pistol.

If you plan to use one of these sets of plans or something like them in the United States, please note that BATF requires "firearms manufacturers" to be licensed. They and their 1968 GCA define the word "manufacturer," so you'd do well to check with them before you put together anything resembling a firearm.

Guns are not readily available in the Soviet Union, where private

ownership of firearms is banned, except for strictly licensed hunting use of shotguns and rifles. Yet, Soviet officials are learning that persons who want firearms will get them, despite tough laws and lethal enforcement. Word has slipped out from Moscow that juvenile gangs have been using homemade zip guns. In Kiev, a gang of thieves was arrested by police and found to own five pistols, all homemade in a local machine shope. Authorities said the guns were sold to these Soviet underworlders for the equivalent of $13.50.

Early in 1975, an article appeared in KRASNAYA ZVEDA, the Soviet Army newspaper, which told of incidents involving illegal guns in that country. Stories of this nature are rare in USSR publications, and western observers were surprised to note that Soviet Law enforcement officials estimate there are at least 8 to 10 million unregistered, illegal, or homemade rifles alone in that country. They figure there are many more illegal handguns.

TRUD, a Soviet trade union magazine, ran an article in the Spring of 1975 about the same problem. Titled ''A Pistol for 10 Rubles,'' the article told how bank robbers from Rostov-on-Don fabricated their own handguns from materials in a local factory.

Back in the U.S., Chicago police confiscated a collection of four homemade pistols, all of which were ''clean, sturdy, very well made, and in top-notch firing condition.'' The owner was not prosecuted as it appeared to officials that he was simply a basement tinkerer with a fine record and no criminal intent. He ''got off'' minus his pistols, plus a strong warning.

In the Pacific Northwest, local police acting on an informant's tip found a homemade submachine gun, fabricated from the bulk of what appeared to be a deactivated German MP40 submachine gun, plus other parts from a local machine shop or basement gunsmith. It was ''in storage'' for possible terrorist or robbery use, police reported. The weapon jammed after five shots and did not function thereafter.

In India, a very fine account of a Khyber Pass gunshop was described by Nicholas Paterson in the British publication GUNS REVIEW. Mr. Paterson visited a Pathan gunshop in Kohat, where native men were turning out home desvned and copied versions of standard Beitish weapons, Enfield rifles, Sten guns, Webley pistols, etc.

He notes, ''The most sophisticated tools I saw being used were a steel vice and a bow drill . . . . Most of the rifles had rough finish . . . yet, the actions were as smooth as a service rifle.''

He said the village contained many little gunshops right in the peoples' homes. seeing one shotgun wroe the ''brand name'' of

"WOBLEY" on its barrel, he observed that the villagers were better gunmakers than spellers!

According to most experts who have visited these myriad of family workshops in that area, each village has at least one original of each gun design they have copied. These originals are considered very valuable and are protected against the elements and theft as one would a family heirloom or a national treasure.

In the area of guns made behind prison walls, Capt. H. A. Tabash, training officer for San Quentin State Prison in California, states that in the late '60s, an inmate built a very unique weapon in the prison machine shop.

"It looks like a submachine gun, but it is really a single-shot, battery operated weapon. It has a soung suppressor made from what is essentially a small motor muffler," Capt. Tabash reported.

"He used it in an escape attempt, and actually fired it at a police officer who was pursuing his companion and him after they'd successfully driven a captured vehicle through the perimeter gates.

"Fortunately, the projectile hit the officer's helmet at an angle, glancing off without causing serious injury."

Capt. Tabash characterized the weapon as a "workable design, perfected by an inventive, mechanical mind. Seldom does one this smooth happen in an institution, and when it does, it is long remembered."

Outside prison walls, people who make improvised and modified firearms also have to hide them. Some of these hidden guns are ingenious, and, in other cases, there is nothing new.

The cigarette lighter gun covered in our earlier volume actually *first* surfaced twenty years ago, as the earliest mention of it we found was in the October 24, 1956 issue of the DAILY POLICE BULLETIN of the LAPD. According to their information, a New York outfit known as Carthage Merchandise Corporation sold plans and instructions to 325 people for $1.

Inflation has hit these illegal gunsmiths, too. A 1975 New York City Police Department notice alerted officers to be aware of a small stinger-type weapon designed to look like a hot comb and selling for $50.

"I guess they really were hot," one officer wrote about the small, single shot .32 pistol which was built into the body of the small, electric hair driers combs being marketed widely today.

In February of 1975, BATF Commissioner Rex Davis was photographed holding a pistol disguised as a air pressure gauge for vehicle tires. The Associated Press photo was splashed on newspaper pages all over the country, amid Bureau cries for anti-firearm legislation.

Officers from a suburban Philadelphia, Pennsylvania force located a crudely made .22 single shot firearm disguised as a large briar pipe. A similar device turned up in Michigan. In California, a suspect photographer turned one leg of his camera's tripod into a highly dangerous, single shot .410 gauge shotgun. The thin, soft metal splintered into hundreds of sharp fragments when police test fired it — from a distance. The ''inventor'' was visibly impressed and shaken, then imprisoned.

With 1976 set for celebration of the original 1776 Revolution, law enforcement officials feel that domestic terrorists will use the year as a ''theme'' for kicking off their own mini revolutions with maxi-violence and eath. Naturally, improvised and modified firearms are a part of this scene.

Following the infamous and expensive gun buy-up in Baltimore, police there confiscated a cut-down, autoloading 16 gauge shotgun late in 1974. Its owner had a record for robbery and terrorist activity. He told the officers the gun was for his own protection in the event of a riot.

In February of 1975, police in California recovered a Stevens Bicycle pistol that had been stolen from a private antique collection a year before. The recovery was sheer luck, according to officials.

The new ''owner'' had wrapped the gun's breech and barrel with heavy electrical tape and was attempting to use a .410 gauge shotgun shell in the weapon. At the urging of the original owner who feared it would burst if fired, police did not test the weapon with the bandit's load. The arrested felon told police this was his personal weapon for the ''anti-pig'' war. He had been carrying it in the top of his motorcycle boot.

Late in 1974, Mexican army troops and civilian police arrested three men who were waiting for an aircraft to land, so they could smuggle their 10 kilos of heroin into the U.S. Despite the fact the trio was heavily armed, they gave up to authorities without a shot being fired. The aircraft never arrived.

Their arsenal included two Colt .38 revolvers, a 9mm Browning Hi-Power, a 9mm Smith & Wesson Model 39, two unknown-made shotguns, and a battered M1 carbine which had been crudely altered to full automatic fire.

The two Mexicans and one American vowed that they were part of the old Weather Underground and that the sale of dope was to benefit the ''Movement'' in the U.S. The trio will be ''underground'' for many years for violation of both drug and weapons' laws. Mexico is not a very lenient country when it comes to justice.

Further North, up in Sullivan Law country, author Truby visited New York City to interview a self-proclaimed former combat leader in the "Movement" who said he was getting out.

"Man, there is no support anymore. There are too few of us. The money is gone, and I can't take another bust. I'm down twice now," he said, adding that he was getting out of New York with his probation officer's good graces.

"I have a clerk's job lined up in St. Louis 'cause my cousin works there and her husband got me fixed up. Baby, I'm joining the system," he smiled.

During the interview, though, he told me how he and his friends made guns and bomb in New York City during the late '60s and early '70s.

"I was the armorer, because I'd been in Uncle's Army. I converted a bunch of carbines for them and a couple .45 pistols. We got three M16s from some Guard heist and I worked on them, too."

He had no idea where these weapons went or with whom.

While the domestic war may be quieting, the long-running feature over in Southeast Asia seemed to be showing signs of active recovery. Stories about continued and escalated fighting began making larger headlines into 1975.

Despite the fact that there is supposed to be a peace treaty, people are still fighting and dying in Vietnam, with the super-powers supplying the goodies, pulling the strings, and the Vietnamese providing the bodies. While improvised modified firearms are rare in action today, stories and accounts still come in.

In 1972, Larry Gonzalez, who did contract work missions in Southeast Asia in 1971-72, reported seeing a very well, homemade copy of a Beretta pistol near Tri Ton. It had been taken from a captured political agent and was the property of a Special Forces officer.

"I was present when some of our Scouts brought in a North Vietnamese political officer in early '72. He was incountry and trying to go deep so he could surface a few years later, when we all were gone." Gonzalez related, adding, "He had a really nice copy of a Browning .25 pistol hidden on his inner thigh. The Scouts had missed it . . . The pistol had Chinese characters on it."

Since the first volume, Major Richard Keough, has sent more photos of other SE Asian copies he or friends observed during assignments in that area.

Fred Alexander, formerly a draftee with a tour in Vietnam, wrote, saying, "I am somewhat a gun buff and was really shook up when we were running a weapons count near Da Nang in 1969. One of the

pieces was a British Stengun. I looked at it, seeing it was pretty rusty and rough, not smooth at all. But, it was not British . . . It had a lot of oriental lettering on it. I guess it was Chinese or homemade Vietnamese.''

Now that you have this textual update of the first book's topics in mind, we'd like to introduce you to two other areas in which the design and use of improvised modified firearms can be quite unique.

In the one area, espionage, we are dealing with the work of professionals who have a clandestine mission in mind when they formulate some extemporaneous firearm. The genre of improvised silencers, though, is peopled both by amateurs and professionals. Silencers are also treated as an accessory item for other fabricated firearms.

Silence is not always golden. Sometimes it is just plain yellow.

— Anon.
BATF agent

The Sound Of Silencers

Over 400 years ago, an Italian craftsman claimed invention of the first practical method to silence gunshots, by making the gunpowder noiseless with his exclusive invention. His name was Benvenuto Cellini, and about at least that, he was truthful. While this odd man, who mixed artistry with brawling and manslaughter, claimed to have invented a silent gun shot, he was as wrong, as have been all his followers in the search for a complete silencer.

Firearms silencers is an area in which your authors can speak with experience, both academic and practical. Our conclusion: There is no such thing as a silent firearm. There are, though, relative successes in this field.

Silencers, like firearms, come in two categories, factory production items and homemade versions. There are far more of the latter than the former.

In terms of working success, silencers are a product of the 20th century. The first successful designer was Hiram Maxim, from that famous Maxim family of machine gun fame. Sir Hiram S. Maxim invented that famed machine gun, while his son, Hiram P. Maxim, invented the first really successful silencer. Naturally, a host of followers also brought out silencers.

In the early days most silencers were crudely constructed even by the commercial manufacturers. The home-made jobs in some cases functioned better than the manufactured ones, but in most instances afforded only marginal sound attenuation at best.

There was some use of Maxim and Moore silencers during WWI and on the Mexican border. The greatest sales during this period, though, were to backyard shooters who wanted to quietly zap cats, rats, or other targets in their neighborhood.

Another early use for silencers is one which would continue today if the devices were easily legal to own. They are great, old timers will tell you, for quietly keeping down the ravishing of a home garden by the little critters who like to share the bounty, such as rabbits, groundhogs, muskrats, etc.

One gnarled old gardner remembered his own Winchester .22 with its Maxim silencer, "Yup, I could pump standard velocity shells out

of that old gun and plunk the damn varmits that were in my garden. My neighbors never heard much more than a 'pop' when I shot.''

One contract agent known to the authors lives in one of the many suburbs around Washington, D.C. He legally owns a Browning .22 pistol for which he has an illegal silencer, made, he claims, by one of his employer's gunsmiths. He also says he uses this device to protect his small garden from the attacks of aggressive rabbits, all without upsetting his more staid neighbors.

A silencer, which is technically known as a sound moderator or sound suppressor, is in the same legal category as an automatic weapon. You can legally own one if you pay $200 worth of tax and can pass the security check which the BATF will have run on you prior to allowing you to obtain a device. There is a lot of paperwork involved in legally obtaining a silencer and it will be registered to you in BATF files in Washington. This is the only way in which a private U.S. citizen may legally own, produce, assemble, or whatever, a firearms silencer.

Although there is a lot of generally innocent experimenting by basement gunsmiths, their work is against the law, regardless of their harmless intent. This is a shame, but it is also a fact of law. Silencers and silenced weapons do not enjoy a fine reputation with law enforcement officials.

Silencers did enjoy a period of limited civilian acceptance after WWI, though, generally on indoor ranges and in the carnival galleries. They were virtually banned a decade later in the United States as a rider to the automatic weapons law.

In Europe, mainly in England and France, the silencers, or moderators, as they're called there, continued to be used. The need for quiet was appreciated in the built up areas of those countries and many gamekeepers and farmers use them for pest control. Ownership is carefully controlled, though, because of poachers.

Silencers really came into their own during the Second World War and the agencies charged with setting Europe ablaze quickly realized the potentials of silencer-equipped weapons in small scale landing groups and commando operations. Special weapons were made for the various resistance groups that emerged behind the walls of *Festung Europa*. Silenced weapons were requested, then brought in and were used for local assassinations and elimination of ''undesirables'' on both sides.

Silenced weapons became a tool of the spies and special mission military people. Snipers used them to confuse their enemies. Assassins used silent weapons, as did commando troops on both sides of the conflict. There were more silenced weapons in use than of-

ficials will admit, even these 30-plus years since the end of that fighting.

Former OSS officer John S. Wood, now head of a U.S. security company, recalls, "We used silenced weapons as regular tools of conducting war in our own manner."

"When I think of OSS and SOE; I remember silenced guns," is the memory of ex-agent Marion Mallory, an older, grey-haired professional who continued his service through the Cold War. "I fired the Welrod, Hi-Standard, a couple Colt pistols, and, of course, the silencer-equipped Sten and your M3 silenced gun."

Later, he experienced silenced PPK pistols, Walther MPK submachine guns, and other esoteric and quieted weapons in his unique occupation.

It was in this post-war period that silencers caught the public's eye. The crime and spy books did their part, but it was the genre of James Bond and his imitators which really did the trick. Silencers became a common part of the film tv thriller. Unhappily for realism, their performance has been greatly enhanced by the popular media.

"There is no silent gun that whispers 'zip,' " loudly claims Mitch WerBell, a premier silencer designer and former silenced gun user with the OSS.

Agreeing, firearms authority Don Thomas adds, "It's impossible to totally and effectively silence a small arm, but many are done so well as to be tactically effective. And, there is a real difference there. But, the public has been misled by Hollywood showing silenced revolvers and peanut-sized silencers on other guns."

The calibre of the silenced weapon is popularly the .22, .308, 9mm, .45, and .32ACP. The last calbre probably outranks the others in Europe and Asia. In longarms, the .22 and various of the .30 calibre class must predominate because of their proliferation. Actually, other calibres are better suited to silencing.

A silencer does its work on two principles of firearms. First, the muzzle blast of a gun is a problem. Because of its baffles, a silencer will allow the hot gases formed by the powder blast to excape slowly, and not pop out all at once as a loud explosion. In this case, a gun silencer works the same as your automobile muffler, checking the escape of those hot, explosive gases, to keep them from blasting noisily into the atmosphere. Instead, the muffler silencer bleeds these gases quietly.

The second portion of a noisy shot is the sound most modern ammunition makes while breaking the sound barrier. The projectile breaks the sound barrier, and creates its own sonic boom, the CRACK of a bullet.

Silencers can cut the velocity of these bullets below the speed of sound, or, on the other hand, bullets can be loaded to limit their flight under that speed. Some cartridges, e.g., .45ACP, normally perform under that speed, thus, no sonic boom.

In any case, to maximize silence, a firearm must have a device attached which detours the muzzle blast sounds, and it must somehow either fire a subsonic round or somehow tune down the hot round to subsonic range.

But, there is a great difference between amateur and production silenced weapons. The former usually look that way and don't work, while the latter look nice and sometimes work, too. But, this book is about improvised silencers.

In fully 90 per cent of these weapons the silencer is at a disadvantage. The improvised silencers make the weapon muzzle heavy, obscure sight pictures, alter range settings, impair function, and deflect bullets.

For example, it is tough trying to effectively use the Luger with a silencer, or to hook one onto a very loose framed revolver. It just doesn't work, despite the tv and the film makers. Actually, the best silenced weapons are those with a locked breech, such as a bolt action rifle or cut-down pistol.

This is the situation with Col. Dolphin's Welrod of WWII fame, and later with the ChiCom Type 65. Both are magazine fed, have modified bolt actions, and where they differ from all others is that the firearm was built for the silencer and not the other way round. This allowed the silencers to perform satisfactorily and has only been imitated in a few improvised weapons, e.g., the Canadian Librod.

As most improvised weapons are limited-use devices, the silencers for same are likewise. The baffles that will eventually clog and the packing that will deteriorate after a few rounds does not adversely affect these weapons because by then the silencer has served its purpose.

In some reported cases, as we've noted, the improvisational silencer maker has been influence by what he has seen on both his theater and home screen — undersize silencers which would not really be effective for the weapons upon which they have been placed. Of course, a sound track editing can totally do away with reality, i.e., the loud, huge boom of a gunshot.

According to gunsmiths and BATF agents, more than a few folks have tried to emulate what they saw in the reel. The result has been one of five happenings usually:

1. A burst weapon and or device.
2. No change in the sound level of the report.
3. Being arrested
4. Seeing the inside of the Emergency Room as a patient.
5. Watching the silencer launch down range, plus combinations of No. 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Serious designers realize the silencer is more than just a tube with a couple of washers inside. The more persistant types will re-discover the Maxim principle of spiral diffusion or the more logical progression to the automobile, muffler type, and work on theories of controlled expansion and gas coolants.

The demand for silencers has created an illicit market for them, fueled by unreasonable government control of these devices. Trained gunsmiths and armorers work for organized crime and turn out custom made silencers of incredible sophistication have become standard equipment for vendettas and collection of loans that others simply make silencers on their own.

Militants turn out silencers for their war against the establishment. Status is very important to these creatures and the possession of a silenced weapon will instantly confer it to the owner in their curious peer system. In the early '70s, silencers and automatic weapons were looted from U.S. Army arsenals, and others were smuggled back from the war zones in S.W. Asia.

One BATF field agent told us about a militant, whose law-recovered silencer was hooked to a bolt action .308 rifle, saying in impressed tones, "The fella who made up that silencer knew his stuff. It was really a big, well-designed tube, with good baffling and packing."

The silencer device and rifle were tested, and showed a drop in sound of 30 decibels when the unit was attached. That is a fine silencer.

In another case, a minor league hit man was wounded and captured by a New York City police officer, who then found the gunman was packing a custom-silenced .32 automatic pistol, in addition to the .38 revolver he had been using in his brief battle with the law.

"We captured a silenced Springfield '03 rifle from a Minuteman group, "a BATF agent remarked, adding, "The device was only about 6 inches long, but about 3 inches around. It tested only fairly well, had steel wool packing, but I don't see how they aimed the weapon."

Testing probably had not proceeded that far, we guess, when the unit was captured.

Many silenced weapons are meant to kill people, obviously. One of these is the "Camera Gun," mentioned in the FBI advisories of 1973, but missing from State Department bulletins. This is because the basic idea hatched with the CIA.

The theory involved putting a silenced firing mechanism inside a camera body with a telephoto lends. The device had a battery fired system which aimed through the rangefinder, then fired, quietly, through a fake lens. The silencer was built along the lines of the telephoto lens. It could be used for assassinations by a killer posing as the ever-present news photographer who uses long, telephoto lenses. Not much publicity made it into the press about the professional use of this device, but, apparently, a few amateur terrorists have picked up the idea. At least one "outside" produced camera gun has been recovered by a national security outfit, but no photos were released.

Less professional people may want to follow the lead of the Irish revolutionary fighter who told us about using a baby bottle nipple for a silencer.

"Yes, simply slice an 'X' in the tip of the thing, slip it over the muzzle, and fire away once," he said easily.

It works.

Another source, whose mission is different than the usual 9 to 5 day described an improvised silencer, saying, "Hell, man, you just get a rubber outta the machine, cut an 'X' in there with a razor, then slip it on the gun . . . Didnja ever use that one?"

The "Ten Penny Moderator" is another silencer which may be fabricated, then quickly disposed of just as easily. Its designer tested one model and concluded its service life is about eight shots. His report reads in part:

> *I fired three shots, one .22 calibre long rifle and two .22 shorts in a 12x12 room with all doors and windows closed. The shots sounded like a healthy air rifle, but there was no booming concussion as you would expect. The shots were not heard elsewhere in the building. The noise level rose marginally after each shot through the rest of the test.*

This moderator consists of a large section of foam rubber which is stretched and rolled tight around the gun barrel, in which holes have been drilled. Several layers of electrical tape are wrapped drum tight around the foam rubber and the gun barrel, forming both an outer layer, plus a bond between it and the weapon.

The use of water to cool gases and silence weapons is an interesting thought which has undergone only minor official testing, as far as we know. One such improvised device tested was quite successful, as this researcher reported to us:

I placed a balloon into the expansion of chamber of the silencer I built for my .22 pistol, filled the balloon with tap water, sealed it, then reassembled the silencer. I fired it in the basement and the only sound was the primer detonation, a splash of water, and the bullet going into the backstop.

The bullet leaves the barrel, ruptures the balloon which sprays the silencer's interior with water, cooling the gases to the point where they do not make any explosive noise. Later, he repeated the experiment using a small, plastic bottle with a balloon inside it. He cut an X in the end of the bottle. The effects of the firing were the same with the formal silencer as well as the bottle. This improvised silencer proved to be a sound idea for disposable devices.

In addition to the hidden gun in a camera, and the plumbing silencers, other improvised silencer devices have been seen by the authors built into brief cases, soft drink cans, and a very sophisticated binocular-appearing unit. The latter, though, was a professional assassin's unit, while the others are the work of improvisational gunsmiths.

Silencers, then, are a recent phenomena, and even if they are not totally efficient, many are still relatively quite effective in lessening the noise of a gunshot. The materials for improvising a silencer are close at hand and generally, it is easier and cheaper to assemble a homemade silencer than a homemade firearm.

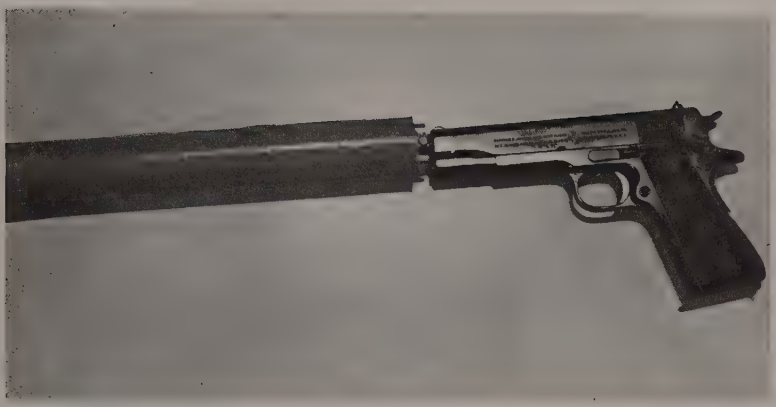
However, the serious trend in sound suppressors, or silencers, seems to be toward more esoteric disguising devices and more efficient ways to quiet the firearms. Perhaps we will be hearing more about less noise in the future.

CREDIT: U.S. Air Force

Survival weapon featured a Ruger pistol with a combination slip on silencer hammer hatchet attachement.

CREDIT: Peter Ecyk

A silenced Steyr Model 34 pistol has received favorable testing by several government agencies and military groups.



CREDIT: J. David Truby

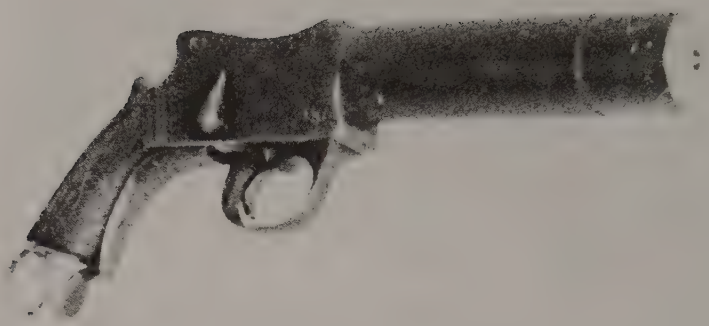
A "homemade" silencer, professionally finished in an illegal arms shop, helped quiet this .45 pistol for nasty business.

CREDIT: Peter Ecyk

A 9mm Beretta was altered for full auto fire, fitted with a pistol grip and a heavy, fabricated silencer. This unit turned up in Pakistan in the early '60s. The silencer was fastened to a long barrel, and the finish was quite crude. But, it worked.

CREDIT: J. David Truby

A prototype MAC Stinger with improvised test silencer.



CREDIT: John A. Minnery

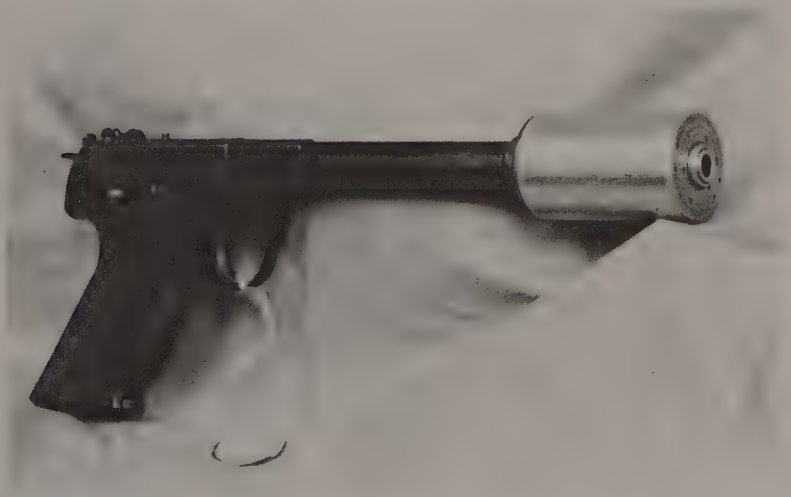
A .303 Martini-action pistol with an integral Gainov silencer attached.

CREDIT: John A. Minnery

A 9 mm Luger pistol with a very effective silencer design by Mario Gainov.

CREDIT: J. David Truby

A very professionally finished job was done by a Mob gunsmith to convert this Ruger .22 autoloading pistol to a silenced killer. The silencer tested very effectively on the BATF device. Both the gun and its former user are now in Federal custody.

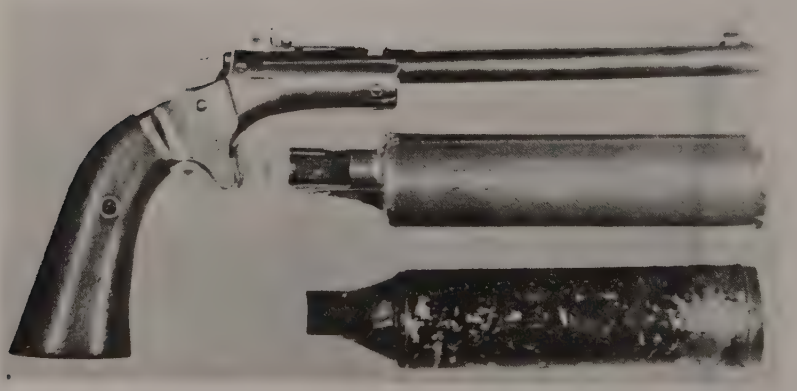


CREDIT: J. David Truby

This illegally fabricated silencer actually increased the sound of the pistol firing. The High Standard pistol, which was stolen from the military, and this silencer are in ATFD custody — as is its former owner.

CREDIT: Baltimore Police Department

Colt pistol with homemade silencer . . . as seized by Baltimore Police.



CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police

Two homemade silencers seized with this pistol in the early 1950s showed Pa. State Police that gangster gunsmiths were at work turning out successfully improvised weapons that worked well.

CREDIT: N.J. State Police

A modified Glenfield .22 rifle with scope and homemade silencer . . . seized in a state police raid.

CREDIT: N.J. State Police

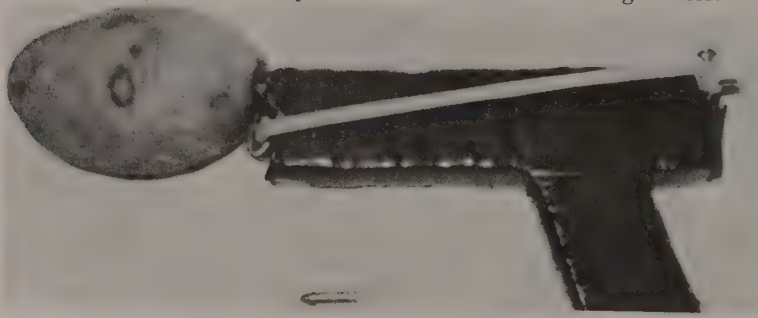
Interior of the homemade silencer, packed with steel wool, used with an illegal, cutdown .22 rifle.

CREDIT: J. David Truby

This Sten MkII, a retread from WWII was uncovered during an arms sweep in Belfast. It is equipped with a homemade silencer and wrapped with a heavy piece of canvas to guard the firer against burned fingers. The British ordnance people who tested the weapon found the sound suppressing quality of the silencer "moderate to poor."

CREDIT: J. David Truby

Silencer improvised in Northern Ireland for a U.S. pistol of .22 calibre. British military authorities reported it of "moderate" muffling success.



CREDIT: John Minnery

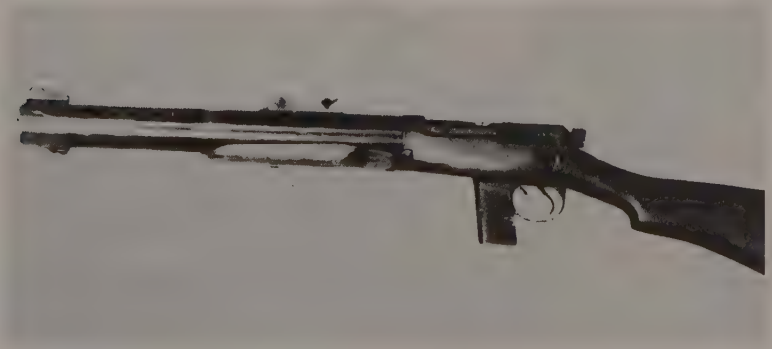
A "Spud Silencer" used by IRA terrorists for one-shot terror tactics. It's reported as "messy, but damned effective." The weapon is a single-shot, .22 Zip Gun that would do credit to any New York Street Gang Armorer. The silencer is an Irish "home grown" variety.

CREDIT: J. David Truby

Sten submachine gun with experimental silencer improvised from the shell of a German grenade launcher.

CREDIT: BEST FOR MEN MAGAZINE

This British No. 4 rifle was tested with an experimental silencer in Korea, 1952 or 1953, by a British sniper team.



CREDIT: Royal Pattern Room, Enfield

The Delisle carbine — an improvised silenced weapon which went into standard production it did so well.

CREDIT: Christopher Truby
Author sights an illegally-silenced .22 calibre rifle designed as a "hit" weapon, and allegedly used for that purpose on the West Coast.

CREDIT: J. David Truby
Robert Scroggie, RATF weapons' expert, with the "home" silenced PPK used by a Mob killer.

There is no art higher than destroying the enemy's resistance without a fight on the battlefield . . . The indirect tactic can lead to a real and lasting victory.

— Sun-tse
Philosopher

The Real James Bond Stood Up

What does a real espionage agent look like? Probably the best person to ask might be the on-line customs' officials of various countries.

On professional spy who works on contract said he continued to smuggle weapons across international borders until only very recently. He claims that increased and sophisticated electronic devices have forced him to rely now on improvised firearms or to obtain wapons through contacts within his countries of operation.

A disarmingly friendly looking chap, he says carrying hidden weapons past customs officials and military control points was usually easy, but very hard on the nerves. He told us he would never do it now with the current security checks and penalties for being caught.

"I am getting too old for the dashing stuff," he adds, "I have carried special mission guns on missions into the Soviet Union. I took a tiny submachine gun, secreted in an attache case, from Hong Kong, through Japan, into other areas of the Orient, then back through the West Coast of the States."

Just after the terrorist scares of the 1969-70 period, he carried special weapons on missions through Africa, the Middle East, then from England to Dublin and Belfast. Smiling, he adds, "And, since I am retired I can now tell you about it."

Amateur hijackers and weekend terrorists have given the honorable art of espionage smuggling a bad name. The professional must now find new ways of obtaining arms in the country to which he has been sent. The close screening of passengers by most nations is bad enough in itself, but discovery of a firearm on or about an agent surely prejudices his cover, not to mention his freedom.

The agent must be able to fabricate his own firearms, using the knowledge in his head and the materials at hand. Obviously, the study of improvised arms is part of the curriculum at the CIA's "Farm" and other espionage training facilities.

Despite our friend and most of the James Bond characters of that era, today's agent simply does not carry a firearm in countires which do not welcome armed spies. One of today's breed of intelligence

agents told the authors, "The uniformed K.G.B. can put you in the slammer for 25 years just for simple possession of a firearm. If they know you're with the Company (CIA) you might simply rot away your senior years in their prisons, or, if you believe what our people tell you, until you get traded for one of theirs we've caught."

Actually, since the Cold War has matured from the actions of 1947-1950 Berlin or Vienna, there is simply little need for agents to carry firearms. As most professionals will agree, guns simply are not needed in the daily routine of spying.

Our retired contract man says, "Unless I was on a specific assignment of protective ambush or of elimination, I didn't carry a gun and was warned not to. I only carried when specific orders required it."

Although most persons would not believe it, there is a sort of loose set of ground rules for the regular professionals involved in espionage. Firearms are not a normal part of these rules, despite the Bondian myths. On the other hand, the various intelligence groups of each nation do have their "animals" or "goons", to whom guns are an extension of a murderous personality.

This is not to say that all agents can be professional assassins. Some must kill as part of their missions, though. Sometimes they know about it in advance; sometimes not. An assassin, though, has only one mission — to kill. One CIA manual records the following about assassins:

> *He and only he needs the weapon to totally complete his mission. His is a singular, highly irregular assignment that requires skill, coordination, and dedicated execution followed by disposal and exfiltration. His work must be total and blameless . . . in no way traceable to his sponser. To this end, false sponsers and local weapons ought to be evident . . . even the use of improvised models.*

As one expert in this nefarious field points out, "Forget about long distance shooting and concentrate exclusively on killing." He insists that a dedicated assassin will get as close to his victim as the mission allows, then shoot from that short range to inflict mortal wounds.

To a pro, the glamorous business of sniping is long range hits, ala "The Jackal" or the shooting of John Kennedy and Martin Luther King . . . a different mission entirely. The assassin's job is exemplified by the powder-burn close murder of Robert Kennedy — the truth of which is denied to this day by the Los Angeles law enforcement establishment and their partners in the judicial branch. John Kennedy, though, was killed by a team of professional shooters using sniper-ambush techniques.

In terms of assassinations, or "executive action," one former agent felt more emphasis ought to be placed on improvised weapons, saying, "We train our people to spy, survive, escape and evade, but one technique lacking when I was trained was how to make the weapons our lives could depend upon."

A former Special Forces officer agrees "In Vietnam, we saw how effective improvised weapons from underground gunshops can be. Early in the war this stuff was common, and deadly."

Further, the ex-agent added, "operators ought to be trained with the tools to turn common materials into improvised firearms, or firearms which look like innocent gadgets."

Gadget is a harmless word, unless you have one which fires bullets aimed at your vitals. During World War II, for example, it's likely some people had their death warrants permanently signed by a fountain-pen appearing gadget known as the T2 Stinger, developed by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

An in-lab favorite of the OSS's collective clique of creative PhDs, the Stinger was a single shot pistol disguised as a rather stubby, heavy pen, loaded with a single .22 short bullet. Various types were tested, including a throwaway model using a long-rifle .22 calibre shot shell designed to blind the unfortunate enemy.

While OSS R & D people were known as the "Black Box Boys," and other esoteric nicknames, the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) producers of the black arts of ordnance worked in "Churchill's Toyshop."

While this all sounds humorous after the war, the sad fact then was that the Establishment Military undercut and overtook these special warfare people whenever possible. It was the same as when horse-bound officers told Billy Mitchell his airplanes were militarily worthless.

The OSS and the British weren't the only folks getting their cloaks stepped on and their daggers blunted, as the Germans had their agents on hazardous duties, too. Thus, they had their version of the "Stinger," which looks very much like a standard fountain pen of that era. The model in one American collection is about 3½ inches long and just under a half inch around. It looks somewhat like its American counterpart, but, unlike the Stinger, the German model can be unscrewed for reloading.

But, it appears that with the exception of Col. Otto Skorzeny and a few like him, most German minds followed the Prussian mold of lockstep that was not quite so common among the Allies as to totally smother creative weapon design.

For example, one OSS experimenter took a standard American socket wrench and converted it to a single shot pistol which fired a special cartridge of about .26 calibre. The wrench handle is the barrel, while the socket heat is the grip. The weapon fires by pulling back the round hammer, then pressing a top button with the thumb. It is doubtful these ever became OSS issue weapons.

Another unusual "improvised" weapon of World War II was the Fist Gun developed as an assassination pistol for the Office of Naval Intelligence. At first, many officials failed to see the concept of the device. Inventor Stanley Haight, in his patent preamble, states:

> *Modern warfare, with its infiltration tactics and surprise, entails considerable hand-to-hand fighting. Due to the surprise nature of these attacks, the attacked personnel are frequently caught comparatively unarmed, in that they have laid aside their normal arms while engaged in oher duties.*

The original design used the .410 shotshell, although Haight intended his second version to fire a .38 S & W cartridge.

In operation, the weapon is simplicity itself.The device is laced to the back hand of the glove, the trigger bar and the barrel lie parallel. When the fist is doubled the fingers are so placed out of the line of fire and the weapon discharges when it is pressed against the vital area of the adversary's anatomy. It is not necessary to deliver a hay-maker to fire the fist gun, and punching it into the oppnent is not the best method of firing it. The operative word is "pressed."

Using the left hand to cradle the right, the weapon can be fired at close ranges 5 to 10 feet, by tripping the trigger bar with the left index finger. Another application is to lace the weapon to the forearm — muzzle to the rear, and discharge it when the opponent is elbowed, or in another similar application, kneed; these uses are in the assassination concept of the device. The weapon readily lends itself to assassination purposes because of its concealability and its unique method of discharge.

A very similar firearm, the Carlstrom Sleeve Gun, is held in the H. P. White Collection. This concealed weapon buckles to the wrist, and uses a pull-type firing string. the weapon is discharged by bending the wrist with the firing button in hand, or by using the longer string device which extends up the sleeve into the lapel button. The weapon fires a .410 gauge shotgun shell.

The Allies had another hidden weapon up their sleeve with a combination club and .32 calibre single shot pistol developed by the British. Although very little information is available about the weapon, it is known as the "Sleeve Gun" in what literature exists.

Apparently, this silenced gun was designed, perhaps by the SOE's Col. Dolphin, as an assassination weapon to be held up one's sleeve, brought into play, quietly fired at the target, withdrawn, etc. In the event of trouble, the firer could always use it as a club, as it was quite sturdy and perfectly shaped as a bludgeon. Truby, who first brought this weapon to public attention in his intitial book on silencers has tried unsucessfully to obtain more information and photos. Later research reveals it was designed at Welwyn, the same as the Welrod.

An earlier model of this weapon was patented in Britain by John Day, designer of the famed cane guns. He produced a number of heavy, unsilenced, all-metal truncheons which doubled as firearms. None, though, is the design of the so-called Sleeve Gun.

Predating the ONI gun and British sleeve gun, E. B. Juhasz patented an "Automatic concealed firearm for self-defense" in August of 1929. The weapon is loaded by unscrewing the barrel and inserting a .30 cartridge. The weapon is cocked by drawing back a striker which is attached to a cord running to a ring on the middle finger. The hand flips back, the ring pulls, and the sleeve gun fires.

Even during the glory days of World War II, some SOE and OSS agents simply refused all their special guns, silenced zip pistols, and L-pills in favor of homemade stuff they could easily ditch in action. They knew they were dead as spies if caught with the generically santized armaments.

Mike Burke, a CBS executive, was once an OSS JEDBURGH agent who agreed, saying, "We parachuted in with the plans or ideas for improvised guns, or we knew we could get Stens for any particular mission. We could always pose as farmhands when we weren't all dolled up like Alan Ladd with secret mission weapons if the SS caught up with us."

Another method for improvising a firearm is to have component parts brought in by various persons and methods. Usually, this is done for a specific mission, such as assassination. Mike Burke recalls, "I heard some of our people did this in Paris, prior to the invasion in 1944, trying to hit two top Nazi figures. Several operatives had smuggled pieces of a sniper rifle into the city. I don't know what the result was."

That comment pretty well explains all the spy and counter-spy activity taking place in the immediate post-war period. All sorts of weapons were tried and used, most of which were the ones previously mentioned. It was more than a decade after the war that a new generation of strange firearm showed up, and it was on the eastern side of a strange new word coined by Winston Churchill — the Iron Curtain.

There is a department in the Soviet Ministry of State Security, in the Foreign Intelligence Directorate, known at Otdel 13. This department is responsible for the kidnaping, murder and assassination of individuals, who, in the opinion of the Soviet Government, have worked against the Communist cause.

In the old days the O.G.P.U. would make a big splash murdering an anti-communist or defector. The salutory effect of a bullet-riddled corpse would keep the other cadres in line and terrorize those who were still eluding their grip. No respecter of borders, the Secret Police would range the world over, France, Spain, Macao, Austria, U.S.A., Germany, Holland, Belgium and many other countries have seen their handiwork. The impunity with which they used to strike has mellowed somewhat in the era of *detente,* though.

The Soviets had done quite a bit of research and testing of various devices, including poisoned darts, bullets, salt-shakers and the like in the K.G.B. Labs under Maj. General Blokhin. Assassin's pistols took shape under General Alexander Panyushkin, and most seem to lean towards electrical detonation of the propellant powder by means of batteries. The use of electrically-initiated pistols simplifies them somewhat and also allows a variety of configurations.

One of the earliest developments was a cigarette pack gun which fired cyanide bullets into the head of the victim as the assassin offered him a cigarette. Another was the Troika, a three-barrelled pistol made of non-ferrous materials to defeat the metal detectors at customs checks. This pistol could fire selectively one, two, or all three barrels at once. For example, their SQUID is a small, two barrelled weapon firing poisoned .22 calibre projectiles.

On October 12, 1957 Lev Rebet was killed in Munich by a gas pistol fired into his face by Bogdan Stashinsky who held the pistol under a newspaper as they passed on the stairs:

From the official records:

> *The weapon was a metal tube, about as thick as a finger and about 7 inches long, consisting of three sections screwed together. In the bottom section is a fixed firing pin released by pressing a bolted spring. The firing pin ignites a powder charge, causing a metal plunger in the middle section to slide forward, crushing a glass ampoule which contains 5 cubic centimeters of cyanide (ten times the fatal amount). The poison is sprayed out as a gas and has a fatal effect within a few seconds since it deprives the blood of its capacity to convey oxygen. Rebet was found dead around 10:40 a.m. and the post mortems stated that he died of a heart attack. No traces of poison were found because the prussic acid had evaporated by the time the medical examiner saw the body.*

Ukrainian Nationalist leader and staunch anti-Communist, Stefen Bandera received similar treatment two years later in Munich on October 15, 1959. This time Stashinsky had a two-barrelled gas gun. In almost an exact replay of the Rebet killing, Stashinsky passed Bandera on the landing of a stairway and fired both barrels at his head from about a foot and a half away.

West German agents suspected foul play, and traces of prussic acid were found as well as particles of the broken ampule embedded in his face. Stashinsky fired too close to his victim.

Stashinsky was shaken by the murders, although, when he returned to Moscow he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner and advised that he would be committing more murders for the K.G.B. in the future. He recoiled from this development and from that point worked to get his wife and himself to the West. He did so in the summer of 1961 and surrendered to the West German Police.

He is now free and living under a new identity, because he was only a tool. The real murderers are in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R.

In a fairly recent development, their gas gun has been perfected by adding a screen mesh to the muzzle to trap the glass splinters and the firing system has gone electric. Firer-taken antidotes are kept in the hollow handle of the pistol, and the volume of the gas increased slightly. The three foot range is no problem as the "hits" are carried out at point-blank range. Such "hits" are called "greetings" in official K.G.B. parlance, which is similar to the C.I.A. "termination, with extreme prejudice."

This second generation Stinger-type weapon is a modification of the K.G.B.'s secret SQUID assassination device. Designed in .22 calibre, it is easily disassembled, and is usually carried that way until ready for use. Both barrels can be discharged at once or separately, depending upon situation or circumstance. The weapon has three major parts: Barrel group; receiver group; and trigger lever group.

In the meantime, the Western nations have been only partly busy in providing "secret" weapons which hide from headlines. Of course, this may be due to our recent involvement in a war which precluded the subtle weapons of the other sort of conflict.

Not a unique, but a vastly improved, weapon is kind of an updated copy of the World War II "Stinger," this one called the SSS-1 "Stinger," is a three-inch-long, two-ounce, one-shot defensive hand weapon.

Despite efforts by both the manufacturer and the U.S. military to limit its distribution to authorized personnel, the tiny weapon, based

on that earlier OSS model, gained favor as the ideal personal backup weapon among American GIs in Vietnam.

"These other guys hang light-frame handguns all over themselves," one ex-Green Beret working as a "civilian" in Saigon observed of soldiers looking for an easily-concealed weapon. "I have my backup weapon in here," and he pulled a black cylinder Stinger from a special compartment in his cigarette pack.

Consisting of a three-inch tube of steel that holds any form of .22-cal. rimfire cartridge, this Stinger has a cocking mechanism, and a mechanical firing assembly. It is fired by depressing the squeeze trigger with the thumb. It is lethal at a range of 20 feet, and there is little recoil if the weapon is held firmly in the hand.

This new Stinger is the improvisation of Mitchell WerBell III, a former OSS agent who has a history of developing highly unusual and useful weapons.

During World War II, serving in the China - Burma - India theater, Capt. WerBell was impressed with the modest OSS Stinger. After the war, WerBell went into the design and manufacture of international armament, and by the late 1960s, he was considered one of the foremost designers and marketers of special-mission weapons.

While traveling in Vietnam in 1968 for his company, the Military Armament Corp. (MAC), WerBell met a CIA agent who still carried one of the original OSS Stingers.

Back at the MAC plant in Marietta, Ga., WerBell's people redesigned the first of the new Stingers.

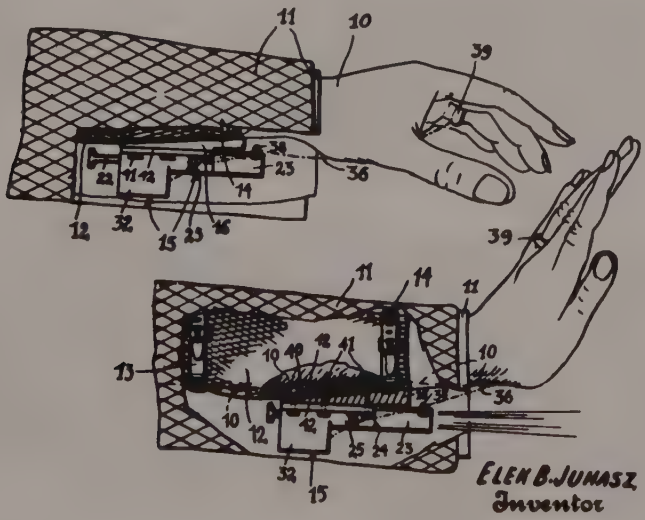
"We found a great deal of interest in Stingers among military police personnel and with Special Forces troops," said WerBell. "We also got some inquiries about personal defense weapons for plainclothes officers."

As the 1970s flow along and there is little public cry for new monies to develop new weapons, it must be plain that both sides consider themselves well-armed. It is almost as if a form of "detente" has been reached in espionage. Of course, the major plan of each says "NO" to all that.

Instead, some sort of unproved, unpredictable, unspoken truce exists right now. And, this comes from very tight sources. From what is known, it seems the East outdrew the West on really secret stuff.

CREDIT: Foreign Science & Technology Center

This Vietnamese cigarette lighter is another in a series of hidden firearms produced for assassination missions by espionage operatives. This example was recovered under covert conditions in SE Asia.

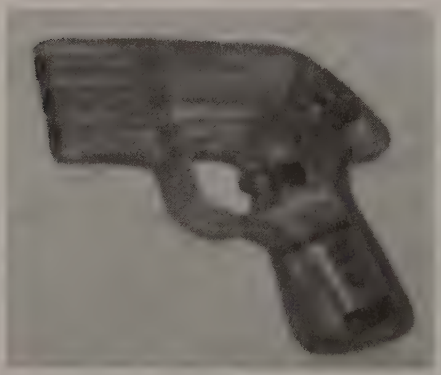


CREDIT: U.S. Patent Office

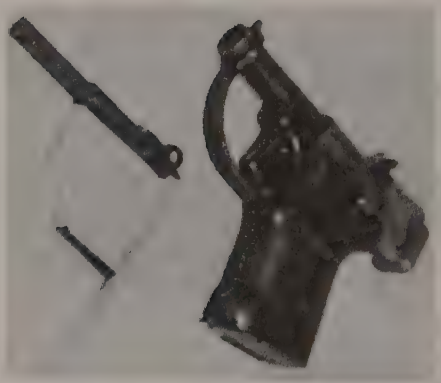
Patent sketch for the Elek Juhasz sleeve pistol.

CREDIT: William Colby Associates, Ltd.

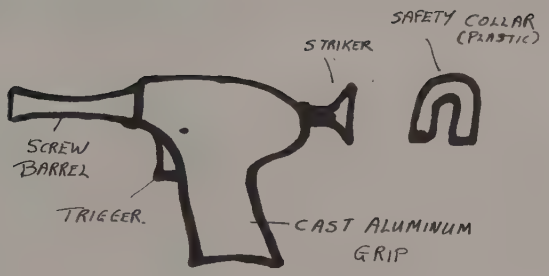
Two guns which quietly fire gas. The TOP weapon is an electrically fired "gun disguised as a billy club — used to fire teargas or modified to fire poisongas. BOTTOM weapon is a Soviet improvised device used for assassination. Firing is initiated by battery power in both cases.



CREDIT: William Colby Associates, Ltd.
Nicknamed "Troika," this 3-shot, .30 calibre weapon is the improvised design of an espionage agent. Using poisoned cartridges and produced of an alloy which did not alarm magnatometers, it is an ideal assassination weapon to be smuggled . . .



CREDIT: Ajax Plumbers, Ltd.
A comparison between the old OSS Liberator in .45 ACP, and a .22 calibre improvised weapon of the type easily made and used by an agent in need of a "sanitized" firearm.

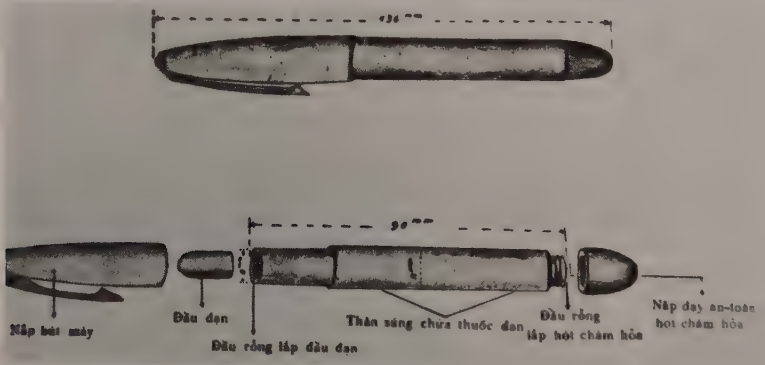


CREDIT: Maritime Associates
Artist sketch of CIA-funded zip gun produced for use behind lines in counterinsurgency mission. About 7000 of these pistols were recently destroyed by Agency directive. According to our sources, about a dozen remain. There are no photos available, and no one outside the Agency has seen the gun.

CREDIT: Liberty Borough Police
Lt. Joseph Bogan examines a custom-made sawed off shotgun now in the custody of his department's collection facility.

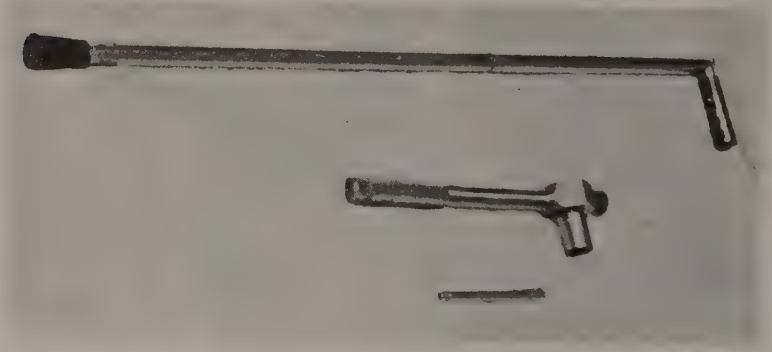
CREDIT: H. P. White

The Carlstrom Sleeve Gun . . . a hideaway .410 gauge shotgun.



CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

Descriptive chart from South Vietnamese intelligence illustrating an assassination firearm disguised as a pen.



CREDIT: Turnsole, Inc.

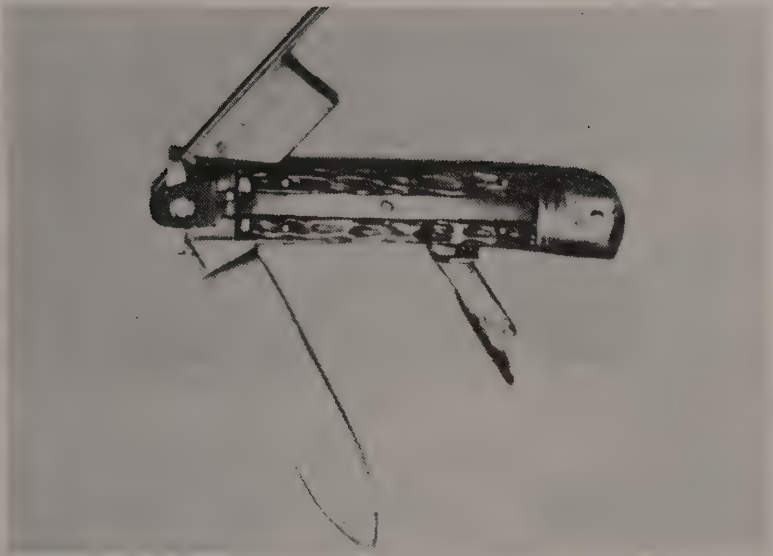
Three examples of professionally produced and disguised assassination weapons, including, the shotgun cane firearm; a ratchet wrench pistol of the OSS type; and a .22 gun pistol of the ''Stinger'' design.

CREDIT: Official Photo

Bogdan Stashinsky re-enacts his approach on Bandera. Gas pistol is inside that newspaper he is withdrawing from his jacket. A moment later he reaches the landing and assassinates the Ukrainian anti-communist leader.

CREDIT: J. David Truby
A .22 hollow-point cartridge is loaded in to the MAC Stinger's barrel, which screws onto the receiver.

CREDIT: Glen Haven Boarding House Alumni
Side view of a trombone-action Assault Shotgun — an improvised weapon whose construction and use is taught to friendly guerrillas.



CREDIT: Lewis Winant, courtesy of Ray Riling

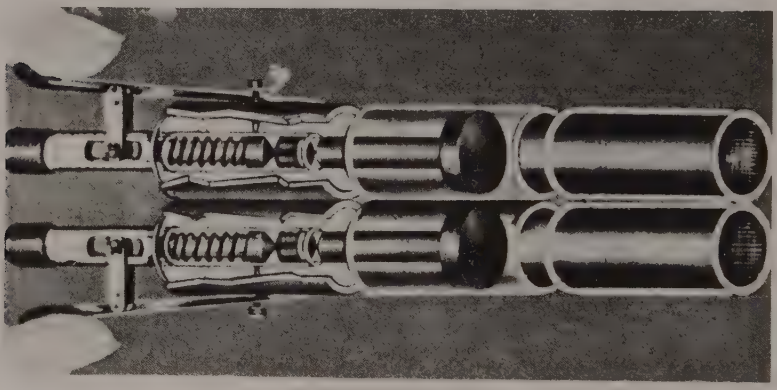
This knife pistol used the same basic German-made switchblade knife with which the CIA equipped many operatives in the 1950s.

CREDIT: Fairways Corporation

This pistol first surfaced in the early '60s and was unidentified — even by the experts at the time. It is, simply, a cutdown British Welrod, a silenced espionage pistol issued by the SOE and also used by OSS personnel on covert missions. Someone took one of those pistols and cut back the barrel to the baffling system. This weapon is now owned by a private collector.

CREDIT: OSS Archives

As a third stage in the development of a cheap, stamping produced pistol suitable for arms drops in mass quantities, OSS researchers came up with this .45 ACP autoloading pistol. It did not go into production.



CREDIT: Reinhard Gehlen

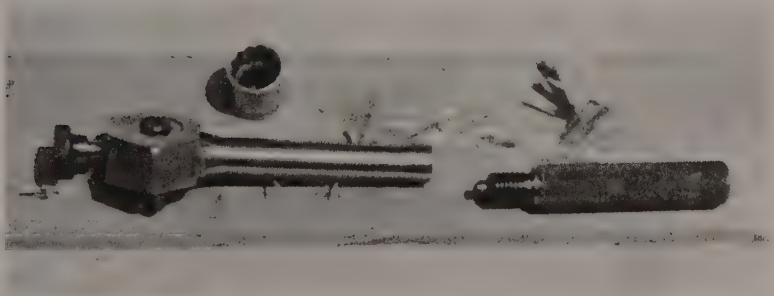
The KGB's hydrogen-cyanide gun.

CREDIT: Robert Koch

A WWII Liberator pistol with fabricated silencer — not an issue accessory.

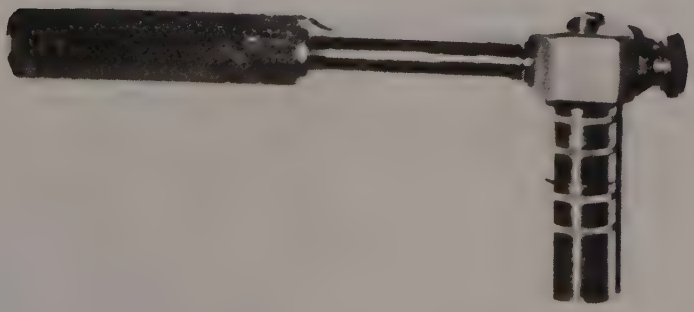
CREDIT: The White Star Mission

Top view of the recently produced .22 wrench pistol, copied from the OSS design, which is currently in use with some agents.



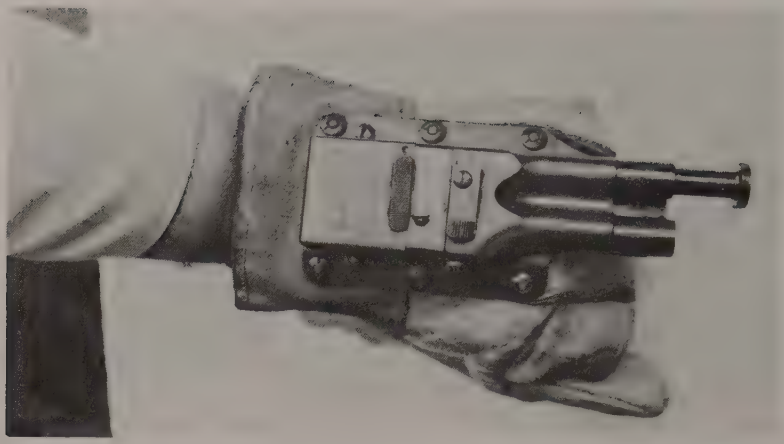
CREDIT: The White Star Mission

After testing, the assassin's pistol, the old OSS ratchet wrench design, is disassembled, and shown with groupings and exit damage using .22 rimfire magnum ammunition at ten feet.

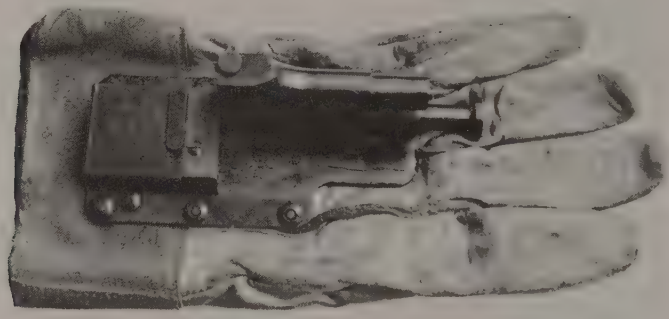


CREDIT: Gov. Gordon Persons

The OSS "wrench pistol", a prototype design.



CREDIT: Maj. Richard Keogh
Man prepares to fire the ONI fist gun.



CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh
The ONI fist gun opened for loading.

CREDIT: Ajax Plumbers, Ltd.

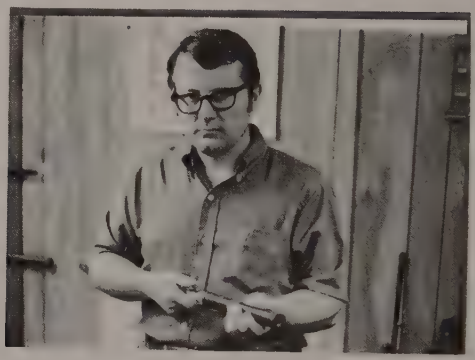
This sanitized can gun is ideal for espionage operations. Although designed to fire a .410 shotgun shell, it will digest a .45 ACP cartridge or a .303 British cartridge with adapters. Shown in the extended position — ready to fire. Trombone action.

CREDIT: Frank Walsingham
Cocked

Fired

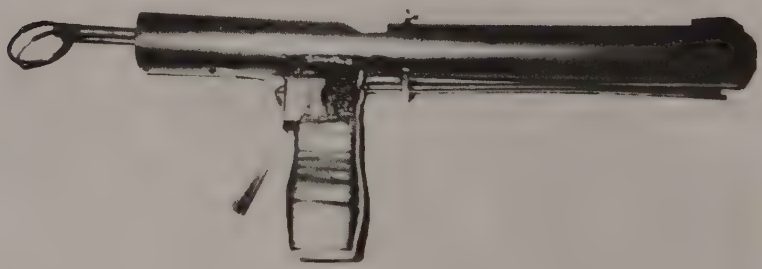
CREDIT: OSS Archives

The O.S.S. Stinger, T-2.



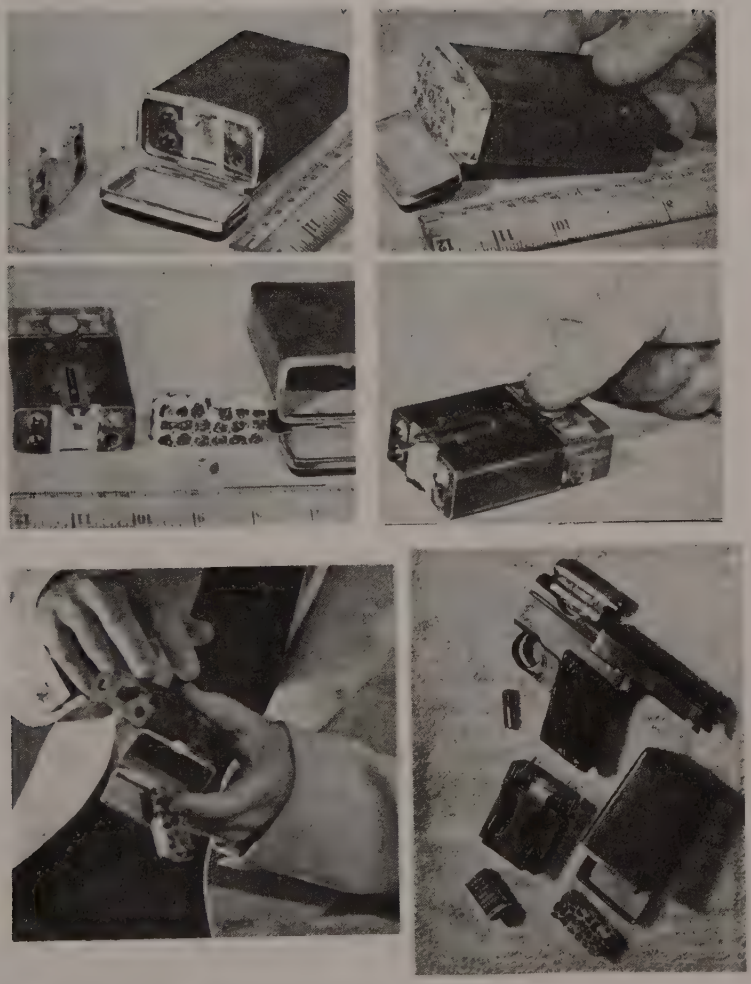
CREDIT: Donald G. Thomas

Author Truby with a prototype silenced Stinger at the MAC plant in Marietta, Ga.



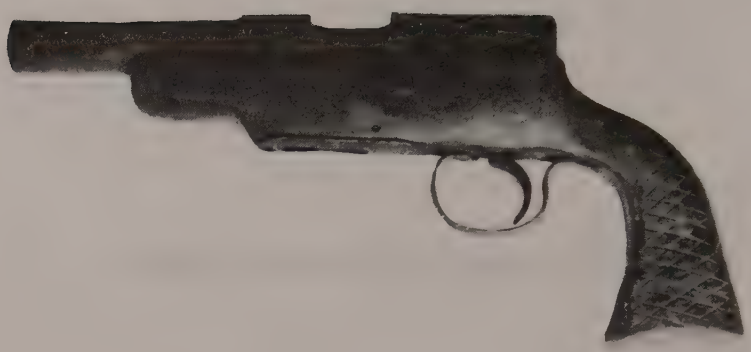
CREDIT: John Minnery

The Librod pistol, a .22 calibre hybrid of the Welrod-Liberator genre . . . invented by a Canadian ordnance expert, it's an ideal assassination pistol.

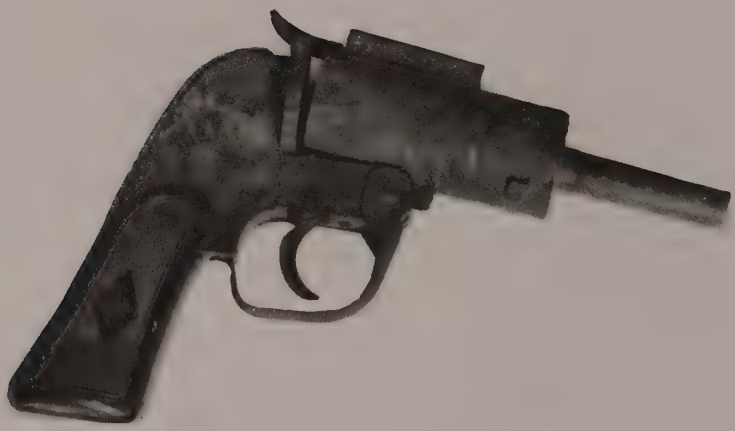


CREDIT: Keystone Press
Soviet poison bullet weapons.

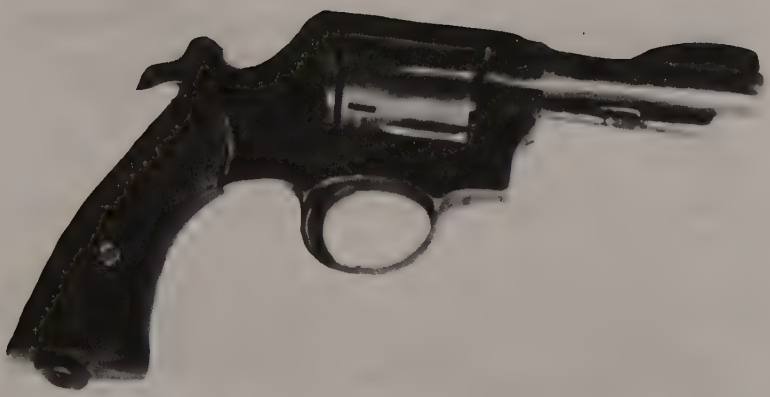
Special Photographs



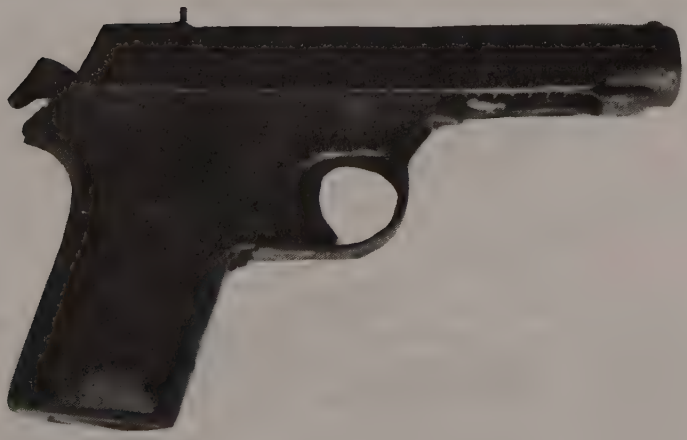
CREDIT: Maj. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, Philippine Constabulary
This was once a new Winchester .22 calibre rifle, which some HUK guerrilla converted to a murderous pistol.



CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, A.F.P.
Originally a U.S. flare gun, this weapon is now a .22 pistol using a salvaged .22 rifle barrel.



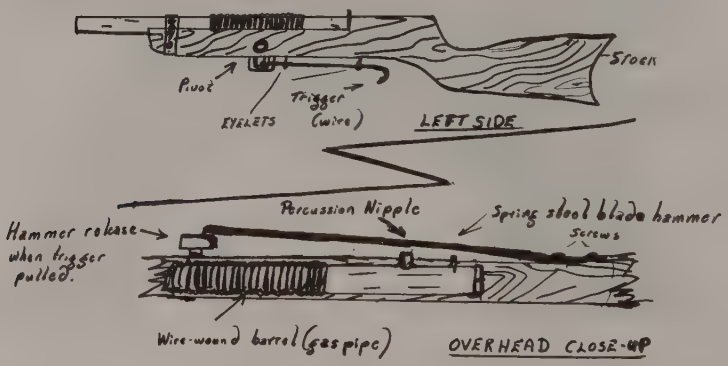
CREDIT: Maj. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, Philippine Constabulary
A fairly common locally produced pistol during the middle 1960s, this 6-shot .22 calibre revolver still shows up in weapons' sweeps.



CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, A.F.P.
This illegal pistol was produced by the Cavitenos shortly after the liberation of the Philippines, and have turned up in a number of crimes and have also been captured with political activists. It fires six rounds of .45 calibre ACP.

CREDIT: David Drummond
Two examples of homemade rifles captured during the Mau Mau uprising of the early '50s.

CREDIT: Chicago Police Department
This cutdown M1 carbine, produced commercially, was confiscated during a raid on a suspected terrorist group. There was some evidence its owners were trying to convert it to fire in the fully automatic mode.



CREDIT: The Museum of the Revolution, Moscow)
An improvised side-hammer weapon used by the Communist forces in the Revolution, USSR, 1917.

CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, Armed Forces of the Philippines
A Twelve gauge single shot ''Paltic'' shotgun captured from Philippine rebels.

CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, Armed Forces of the Philippines
This 16 gauge homemade ''Paltic'' shotgun uses portions of an M16 rifle, with scrap parts, to produce a sophisticated, 6-shot weapon with a revolving cylinder.

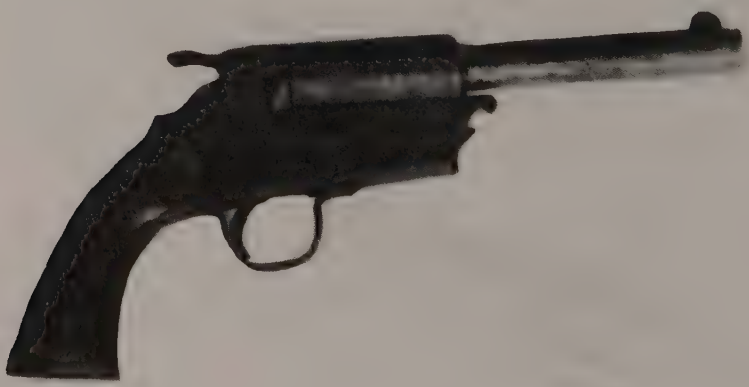
CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, Armed Forces of the Philippines
This modified bolt-action 12 gauge shotgun has an extension-type stock and a homemade, long barrel.

CREDIT: Glen Haven Boarding House Alumni

The action of the 12 gauge guerrilla gun — showing hammer, striker (which is a nail), and the end cap breech.

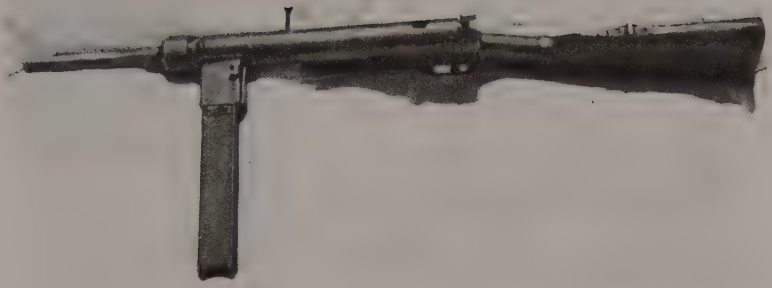
CREDIT: Glen Haven Boarding House Alumni

Example of the type of 12 gauge guerrilla shotgun that Special Forces personnel and S.F. alums are taught how to make, so as to instruct friendly guerrilla troops in its construction and use.



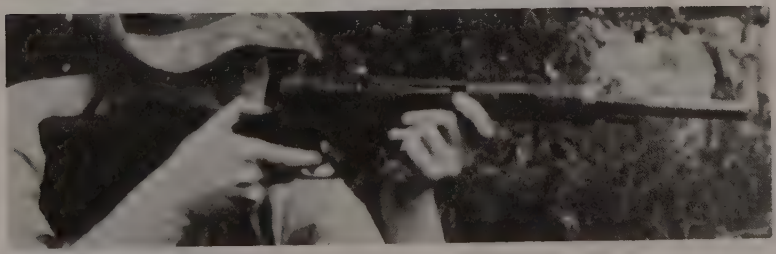
CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, A.F.P.

This single shot, 16 gauge shotshell pistol was liberated by the Philippine Army from a political terrorist.

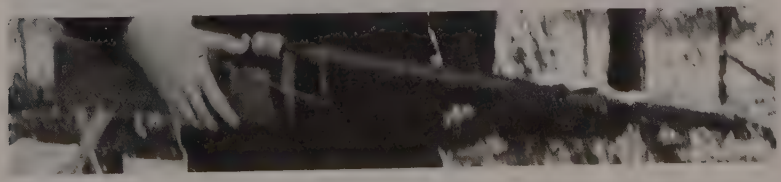


CREDIT: J. David Truby
Top view of the home-built Indonesian Sten gun.

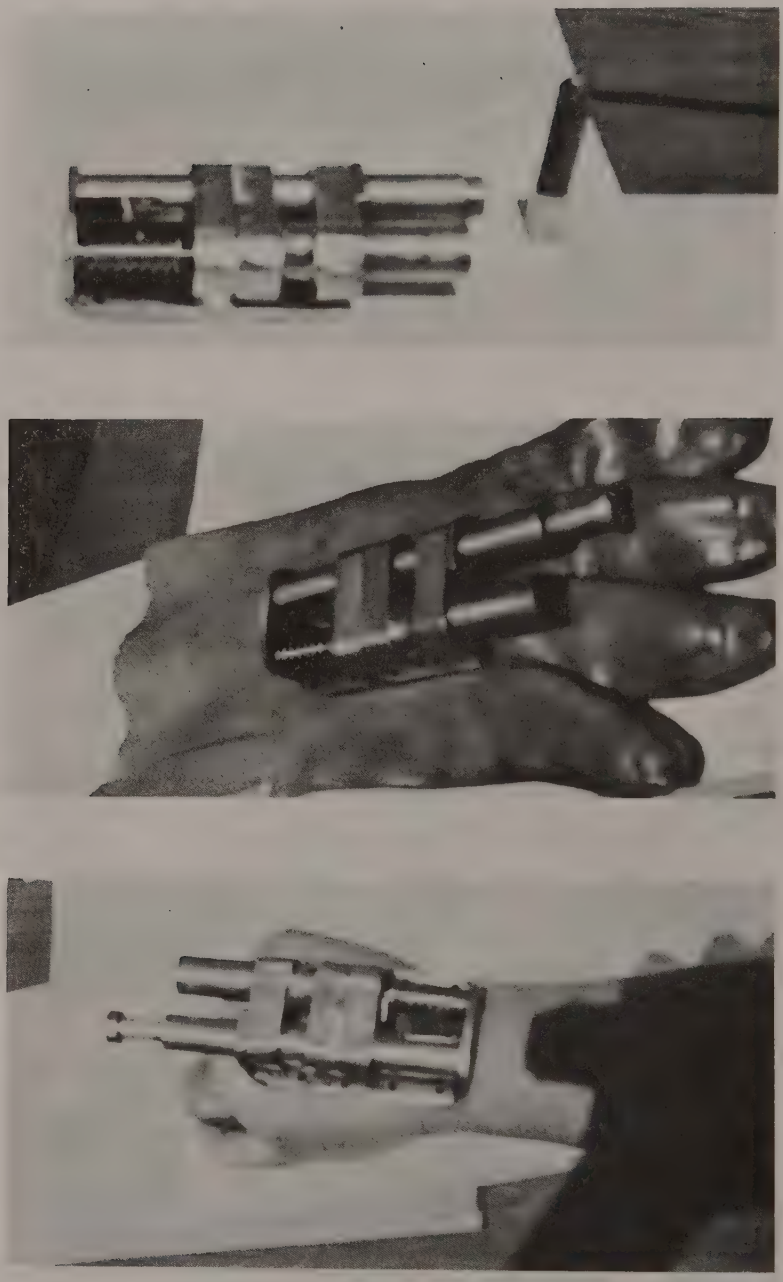
CREDIT: J. David Truby
A 9mm home-built Indonesian Sten gun produced during one of the many fights for independence.



CREDIT: John Pullen
Indonesian rebels and others with needs for illegal weapons produced their copies of the Sten gun.

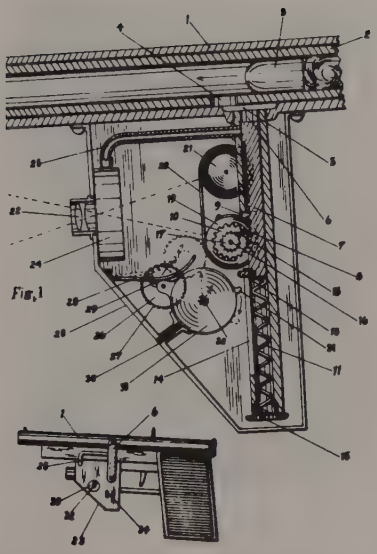


CREDIT: J. David Truby
A homemade .12 gauge shotgun made from pipe and scrap wood.



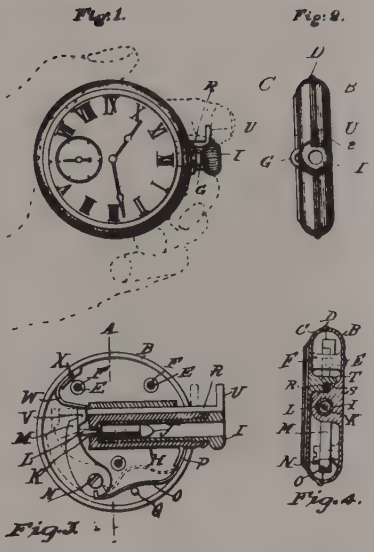
CREDIT: J. David Truby

The ONI Fist Gun idea has been used by domestic terrorists, too. This .410 model was built by a non gunsmith . . . and, it works all too well.



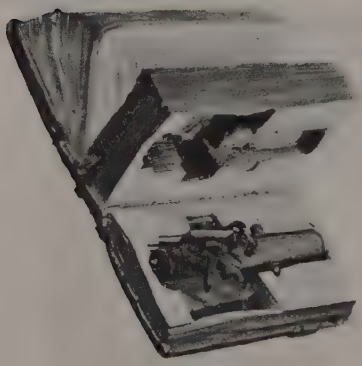
CREDIT: U.S. Patent Office

Patent sketch for a camera inside a gun.



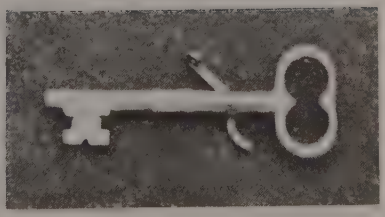
CREDIT: U.S. Patent Office

Leonard Woods' patent for a gun inside a pocket watch.

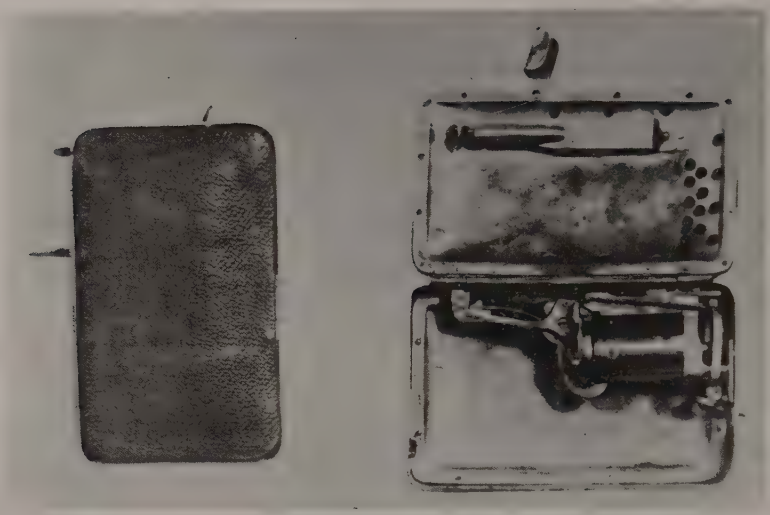


CREDIT:
The National Geographic Society

Doge Francesco Morosini had a concealed pistol in his prayer book during the 17th century. The small knob-like bookmark was the trigger.

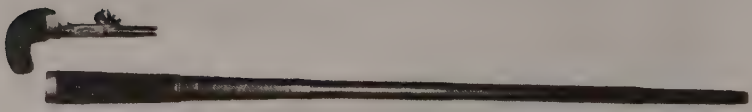


Key Pistol



CREDIT: H. P. White
A very early example of the disguised hidden gun — the Frankenau Pocketbook gun in 5mm pinfire.

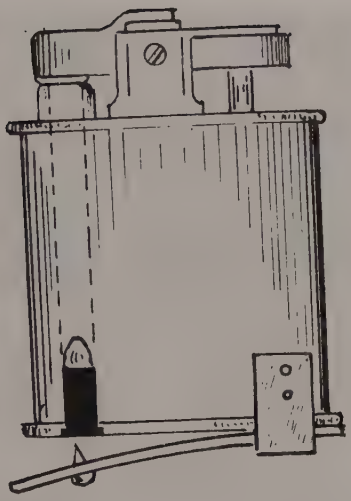
CREDIT: Lewis Winant, courtesy of Ray Riling
The Colvin Sword-pistol.



CREDIT: Dr. W. R. Funderburg, courtesy of Ray Riling.
A flintlock cane gun in a private collection.

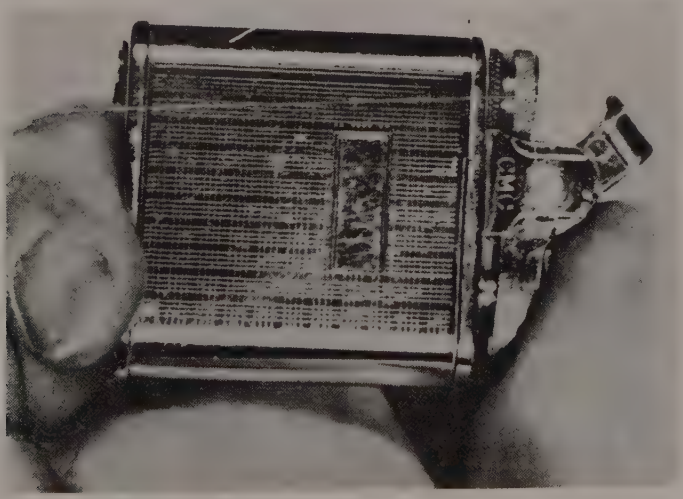
CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police

Photo of innocent-looking cigarette lighter — note thumb-depressing trigger, which exposes the stubby barrel (left) of a deadly .22 calibre firearm.



CREDIT: J. David Truby

Sketch of cigarette lighter pistol design advocated by various terrorist groups for use as a hidden firearm against their plethora of enemies.

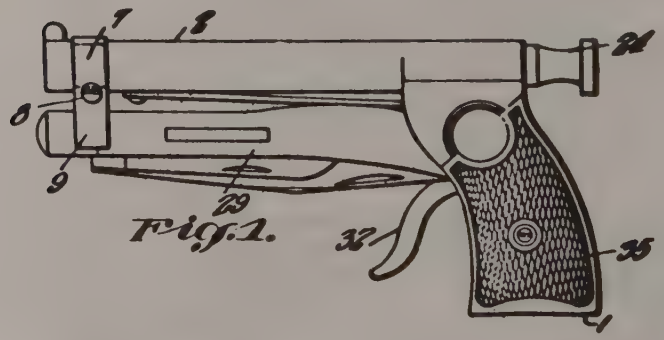


CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police

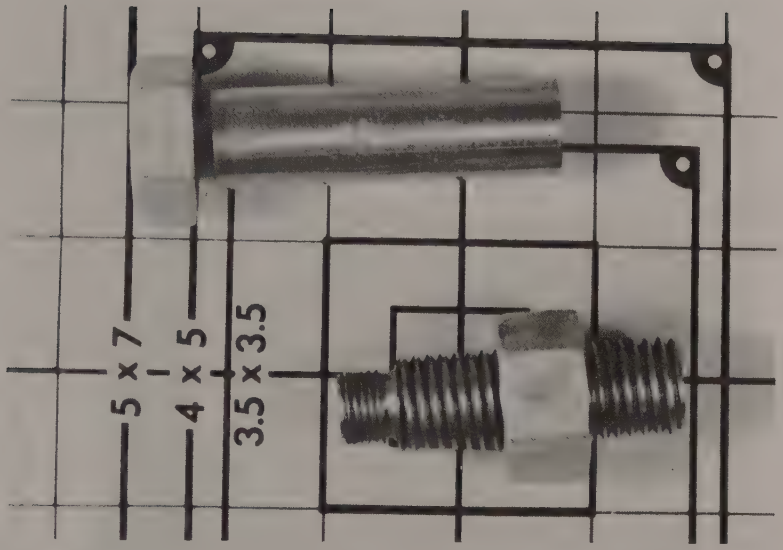
A professionally-done conversion of a pocket lighter turned it into a very lethal .22 calibre pistol.

CREDIT: Frank Horner, courtesy of Ray Riling.
A disguised knife pistol now in a private collection.

CREDIT: Lewis Winant, courtesy of Ray Riling
The James Rodgers Knife Pistol.

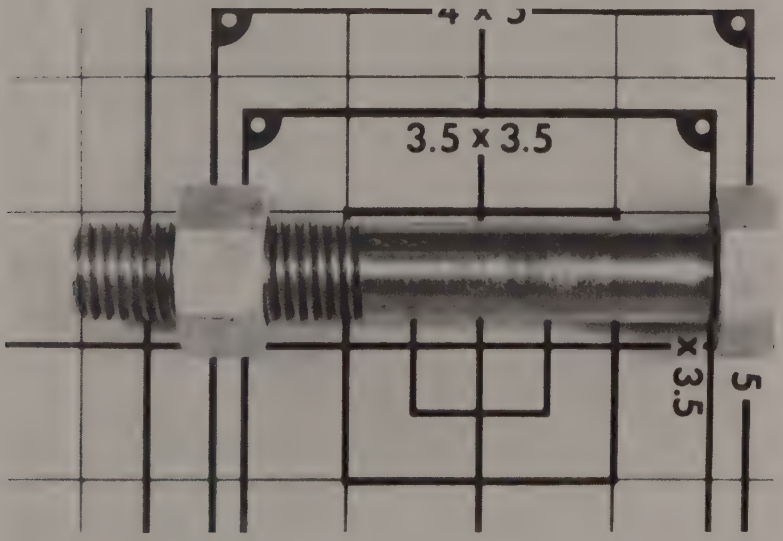


CREDIT: U.S. Patent Office
Patent sketch of representative knife firearm combination, designed in 1924 by L. E. Polhemus.



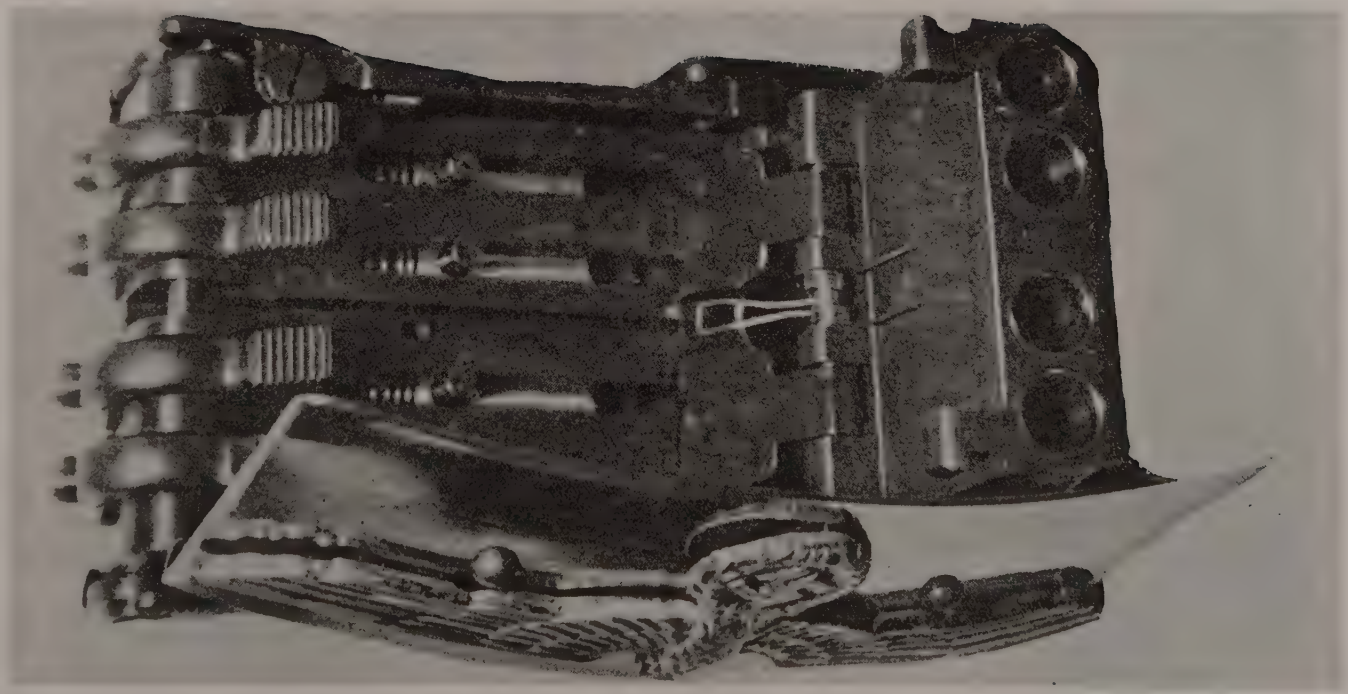
CREDIT: Det. John Tribe

.22 cal. Bolt Gun unthreaded for loading. (hex head pulled slightly back.)



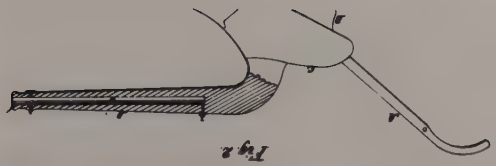
CREDIT: Det. John Tribe

.22 Bolt Gun assembled ready to fire. Actually fired 4 test rounds.

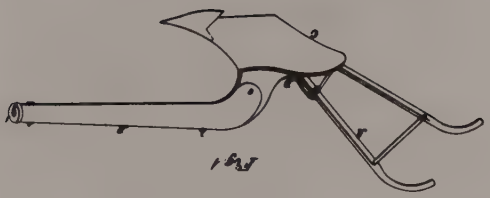


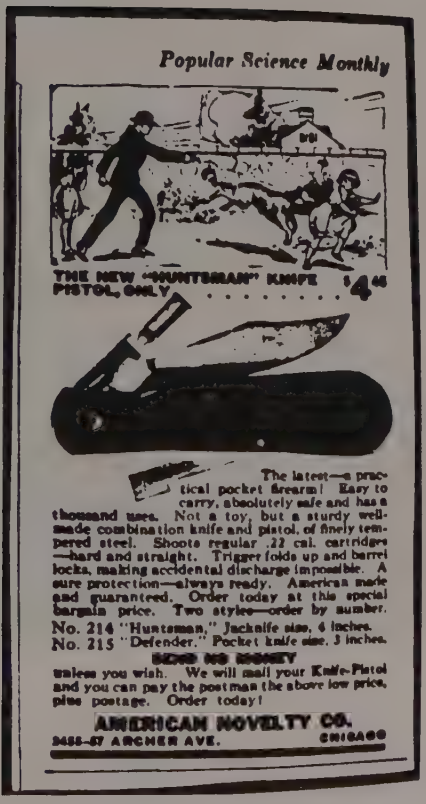
CREDIT: Gov. Gordon Persons

Nazi belt buckle gun, with 4 barrels. Several fakes made in Austria have appeared since the war.

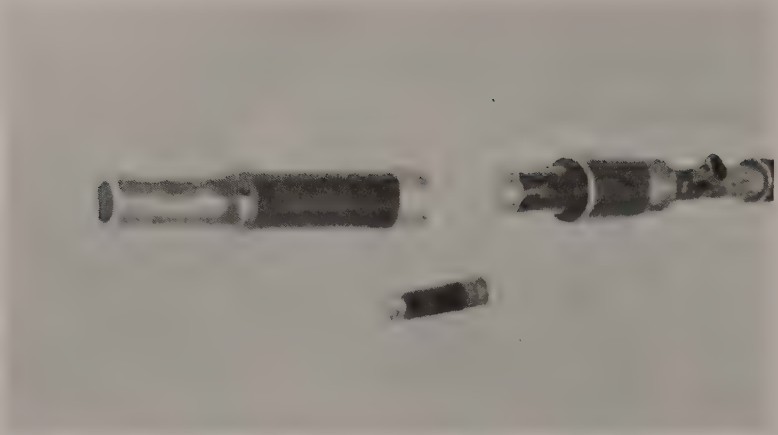


CREDIT:
U.S. Patent Office
An unusual disguised gun — the plow gun of 1862.




Popular Science Monthly
THE NEW "HUNTSMAN" KNIFE PISTOL, ONLY
4.44
The latest—a practical pocket firearm! Easy to carry, absolutely safe and has a thousand uses. Not a toy, but a sturdy well-made combination knife and pistol, of finely tempered steel. Shoots regular .22 cal. cartridges—hard and straight. Trigger folds up and barrel locks, making accidental discharge impossible. A sure protection—always ready. American made and guaranteed. Order today at this special bargain price. Two styles—order by number.
No. 214 "Huntsman," Jackknife size, 4 inches.
No. 215 "Defender," Pocket knife size, 3 inches.
SEND NO MONEY
unless you wish. We will mail your Knife-Pistol and you can pay the postman the above low price, plus postage. Order today!
AMERICAN NOVELTY CO.
3455-57 ARCHER AVE.
CHICAGO

CREDIT:
Popular Science Monthly
Consumer ad for public sale of the "Huntsman" knife pistol combination.



CREDIT: John A. Minnery

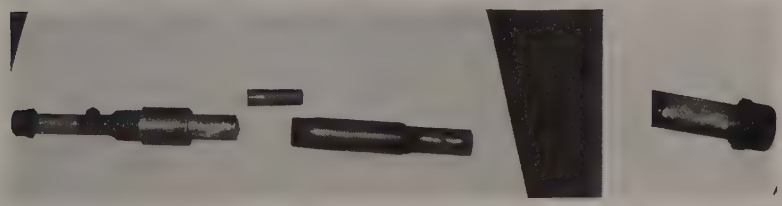
12 gauge shotgun made from scrap pipe by a prison inmate.

CREDIT: J. David Truby

Hollywood shows what its propmaster have in mind for prison-made weapons, from the film ''Canon City,'' an actual Colorado prison. The actor at left is the then-young Scott Brady. He's holding a mammoth zip gun, while the other two actor-convicts have pipe guns.

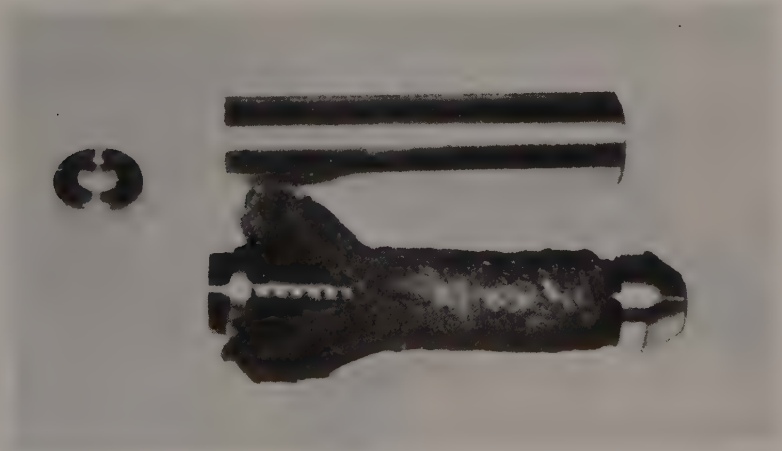
CREDIT: John A. Minnery

Two prison-made .22 pentype guns. The upper one has a lever trigger very much like the Soviet Department V *Squid* assassination gun. The lower pengun uses a pull release.



CREDIT: John Tighe

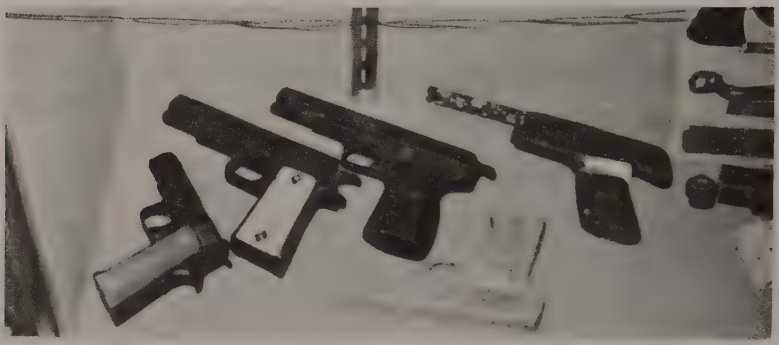
Disassembled 12 gauge "Collins Bay" shotgun, made in prison to use smuggled in cartridge.



CREDIT: John Tighe

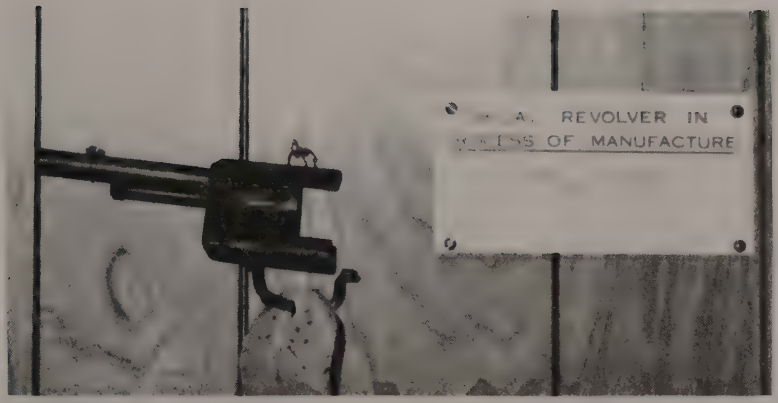
The disassembled prison-made silencer used steel wool, end caps, and gas escape holes — obviously, the maker knew the business of silencing firearms.

CREDIT: John Tighe
A prison-made firearm of the pen gun type fired a .22 calibre cartridge.



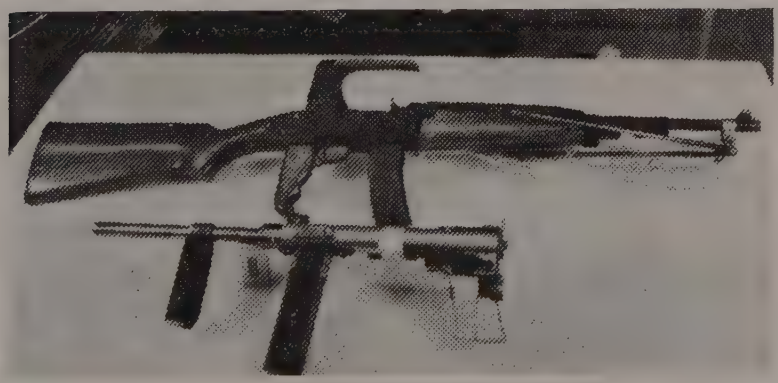
CREDIT: John A. Minnery
Collection of ''ruse'' pistols, fakes made by inmates of Canadian prisons, ala the infamous gun carved by John Dillinger.

CREDIT: Canadian Penitentiary Service Museum
Homemade guns used by prisoners of various Canadian penitentiaries.

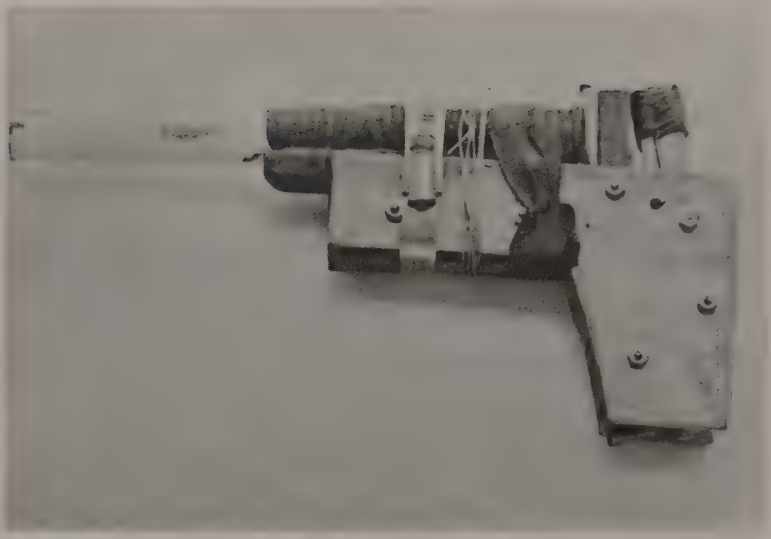


CREDIT: John Tighe, Correctional Staff College Museum (Canada)
Photo shows half completed (difficult half by the way) .38 cal. revolver recovered in prison search.

CREDIT: John Tighe, Correctional Staff College Museum (Canada)
Lever release .22 zipgun showing similarity to Soviet SQUID pistol.



CREDIT: BATF
Two fully automatic conversions made from spare parts and improvisations. Top example is an M1 carbine converted to automatic with assault rifle parts soldered on for effect. Below, 9mm machine gun was produced in a *prison workshop!* The 30-shot, fully automatic, blowback action gun worked perfectly.

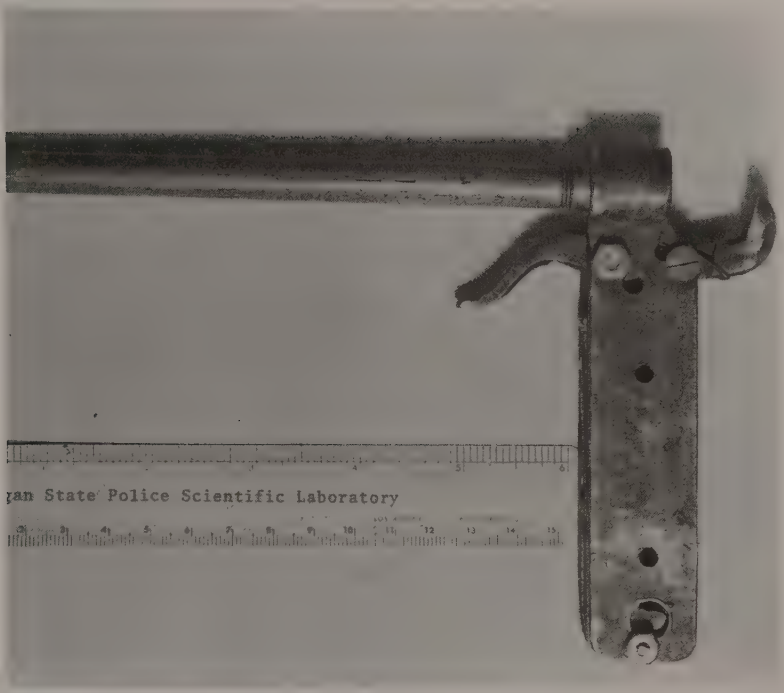


CREDIT: Paul W. Wells

This 20 gauge shotgun, homemade in the shop of Camp No. 5, was used in a prison break at that Mississippi prison. It wounded on guard. It's owner is now out of the gun designing and building business, permanently.

CREDIT: Mississippi State Penitentiary

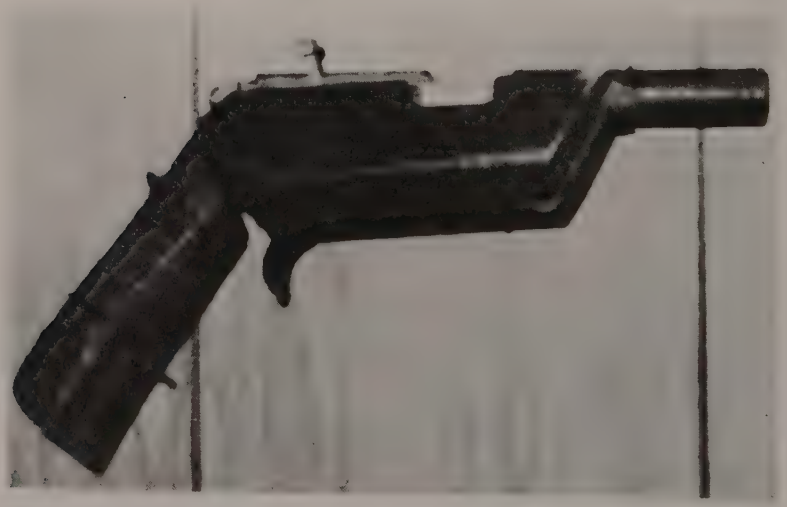
Strict weapon enforcement did not keep a Mississippi prison inmate from scrounging the materials to make this firearm.



CREDIT: David Townshend, Michigan State Police
The assembled weapon, made by a Michigan convict, fired a wood screw bullet.

CREDIT: John Tighe
Four shot, .32 calibre handgun captured in a Canadian prison.

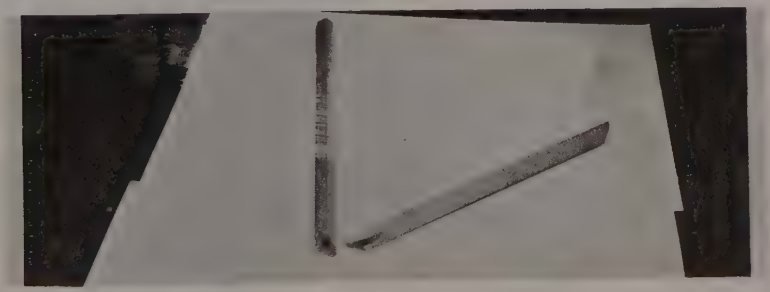
CREDIT: David Townshend, Michigan State Police
The disassembled homemade cartridge used in the Michigan convict's gun.



CREDIT: John Tighe
A bolt action .22 calibre zip gun from a Canadian prison.

CREDIT: John A. Minnery
Firing the prison-made .22 pengun by squeezing the lever which releases a cocked striker.

CREDIT: John Tighe, Correctional Staff College Museum, Canada.
12 ga. weapon made in prison (Collins Bay) pencil points to striker bolt in its L' shot (similar to pen-gun firing) This weapon was recovered by authorities after an anonymous letter was delivered to the warden's office.



CREDIT: John Tighe, Correctional Staff College Museum of Canada
Parts of picture frame were hollowed out to conceal .22 ammunition that was smuggled into a Canadian prison.

CREDIT: Maj. Richard Keogh
Long-barreled copy of the Mauser carbine, as done by the Chinese, probably in their Taku Naval Yard.

CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh, courtesy of AUTO MAG
Chinese copy of the Soviet Tokarev pistol.

CREDIT: U.S. Army

Illustrated handbook to be issued to friendly "resistance and guerilla" groups shows how to make, load, and fire improvised weapons. The U.S. Army borrowed many of the basic designs from Viet Cong homemade weapons. This series shows the cocking, firing, and unloading of the spent shell while using the 9mm handmade pistol. Two photos of two different models.

HOW TO OPERATE SHOTGUN

1. To Load

a. Take plug out of coupling.

b. Put shotgun shell into pipe.

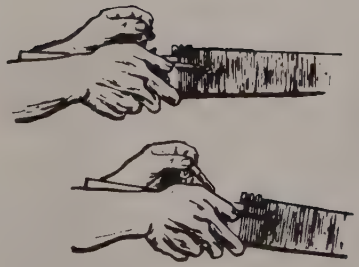
c. Screw plug hand-tight into coupling.

2. To Fire

a. Pull strap back and hold with thumb.

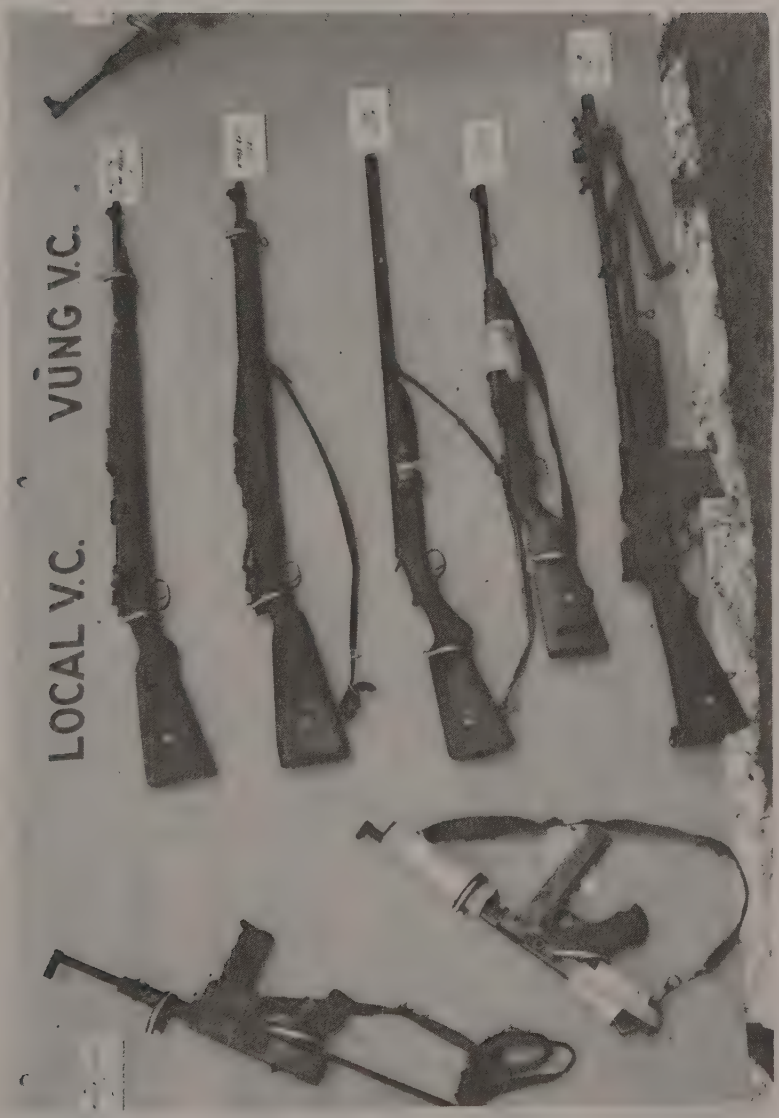
CREDIT: U.S. Army

"How to operate the homemade shotgun" — instructions from the U.S. Army in a handbook to be issued to "friendlies" operating behind enemy lines or in other guerilla or resistance operations.



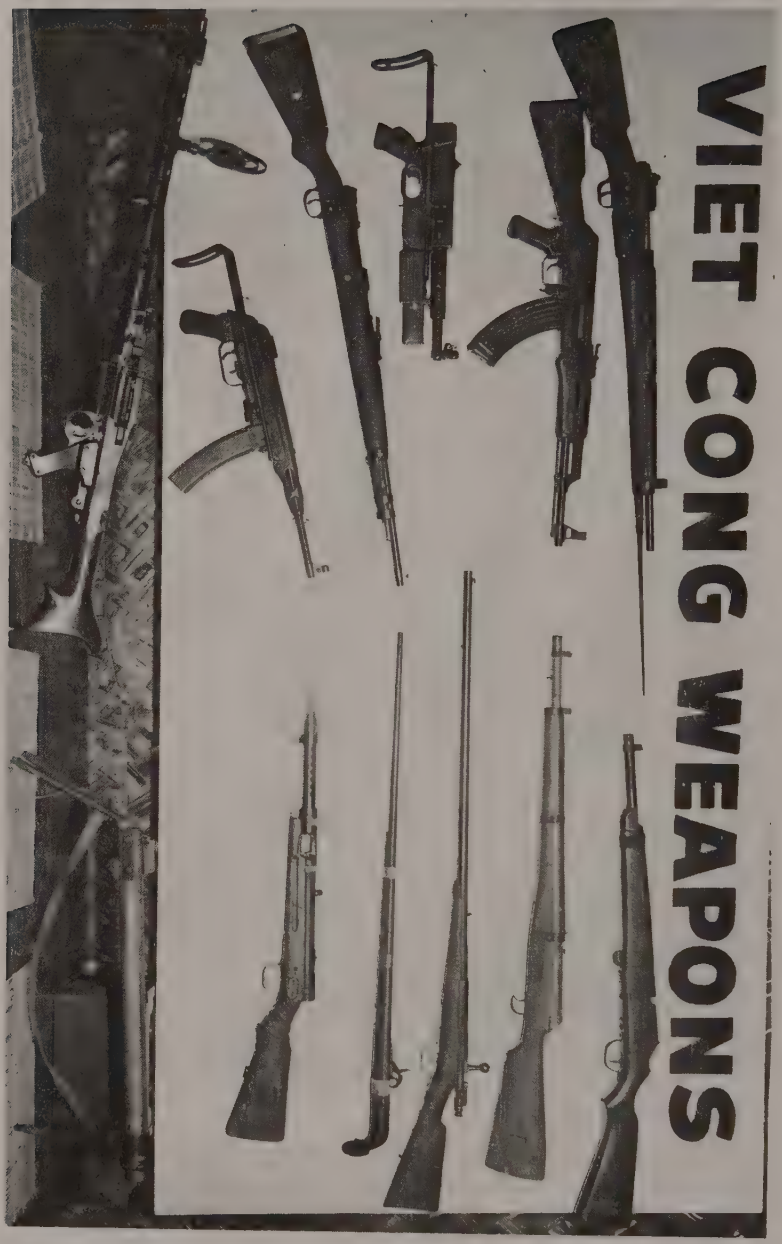
CREDIT: U.S. Army

Same as shotgun — only for the homemade rifle.



CREDIT: U.S. Army

Homemade and modified weapons captured from the Viet Cong by members of the 1st Air Cav Division late in 1965.



CREDIT: U.S. Army

This display board shows some of the weapons captured by the 25th Infantry Division in Vietnam in 1965. Included are a number of modifications and improvisations.

CREDIT: John P. Wilson

Two comparison photos show the difference between (top) a Viet Cong copy of a U.S. .45 pistol, and the real item (bottom). For one thing, the thumb safety has no corresponding notch on the copy.

CREDIT: John P. Wilson

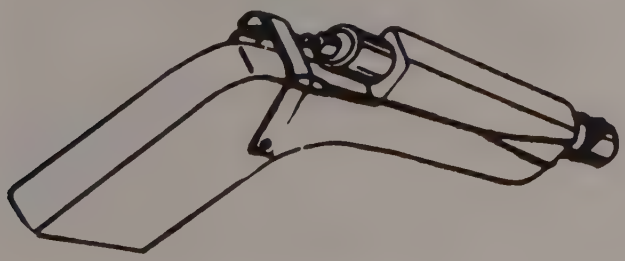
M Sgt. John P. Wilson of 5th Special Forces Group examines crude, but still lethal, Viet Cong version of the U.S. service pistol.

CREDIT: West Point Museum

Another Viet Cong version, basically, of the Thompson submachine gun.

CREDIT: West Point Museum

Army ordnance officers class this VC copy of the Thompson "very well made . . . it came from a shop 'up north'."



CREDIT: U.S. Army

Sketch of a waterpipe pistol which may be easily made by "friendly" resistance troops.

CREDIT: West Point Museum, USMA

A ChiCom submachine gun modified for use by the Vietnamese — the Model 50.

CREDIT: West Point Museum, USMA

A Viet Cong modified MAT 49 submachine gun, left behind by the French, then turned on Americans.

CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

A French MAT 49 smg, as modified by the Viet Cong. This weapon was captured in Darlac Province.

CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh

Stripped Viet Cong pistol which is copy of M1911A1.

CREDIT: U.S. Army

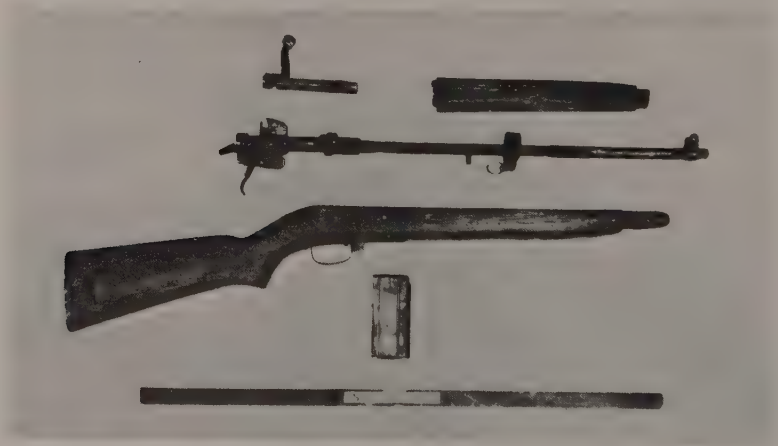
Homemade rifle captured in Vietnam.

CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

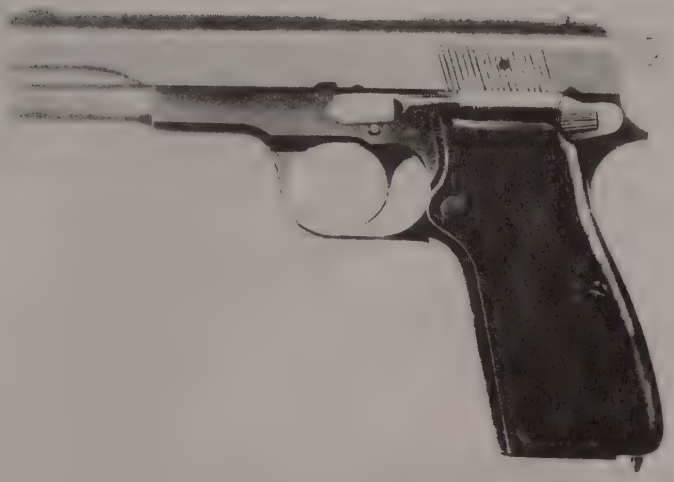
Yet another copy of the Thompson submachine gun as produced in a Viet Cong gunshop.

CREDIT: Frank Moyer
Viet Cong modified version of the Chi-Com Model 50 submachine gun.

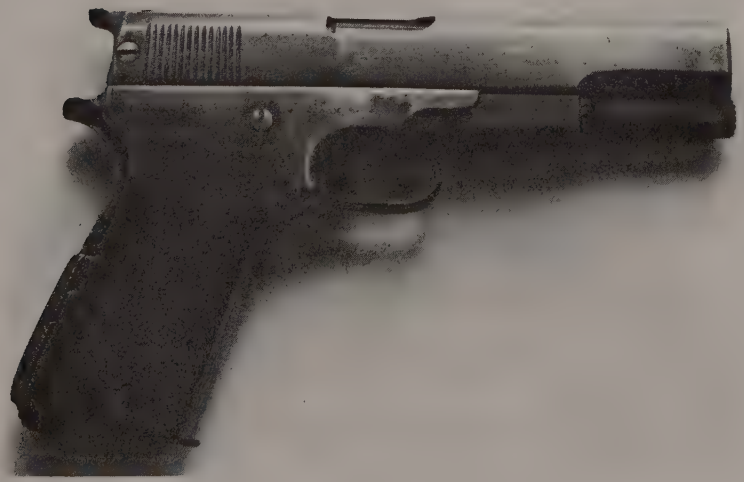
CREDIT: Tom Swearengen
An unusual trophy of the Vietnamese war, this weapon is a copymf the famed Beretta Model 12 smg, which was produced in an Indonesian ''underground'' weapons shop. It turned up, somehow, with the Viet Cong, and was captured by U.S. Marines at Tay Ninh.



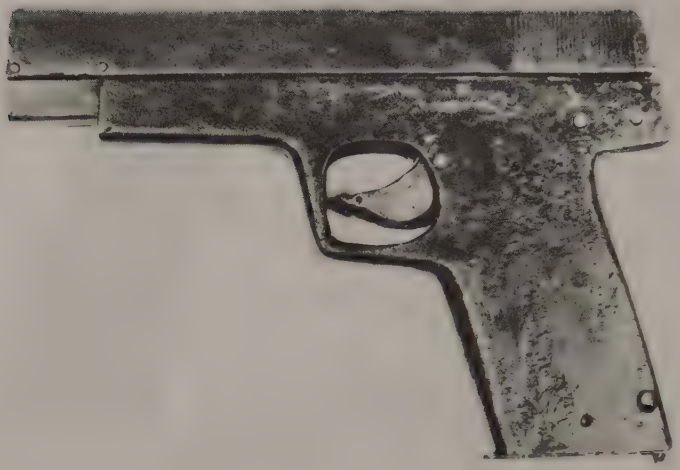
CREDIT: Tom Swearengen
The VC copy of the M1 carbine — stripped. The M-1 carbine was a status symbol among the V.C. The design suited their small frame.



CREDIT: U.S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center
The famous Browning 9mm military pistol was copied by the Viet Cong in their effort to build a battle-proved arsenal. A popular design throughout Asia.



CREDIT: Richard Brezner, courtesy of AUTO MAG.
A South East Asia copy of the U.S. 1911 pistol, this weapon was described by its former owner as being completely handmade. The straight blow-back weapon handles the .45 ACP cartridge.

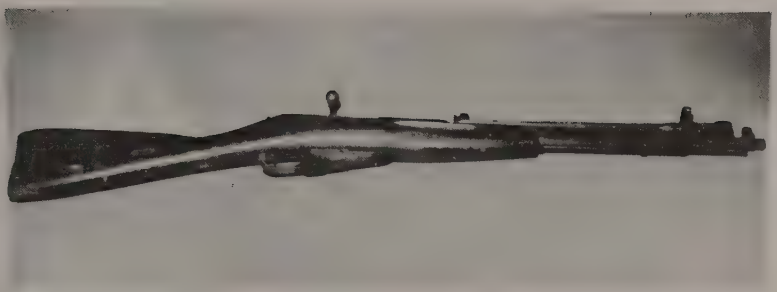


CREDIT: Keogh

9mm pistol captured near Can Tho, 1967 — carried by V.C. political officer.

CREDIT: U.S. Army

One of the famous Cao Dai firearm copies — a 9mm version of the US M1911A1 pistol, liberated in S. Vietnam.

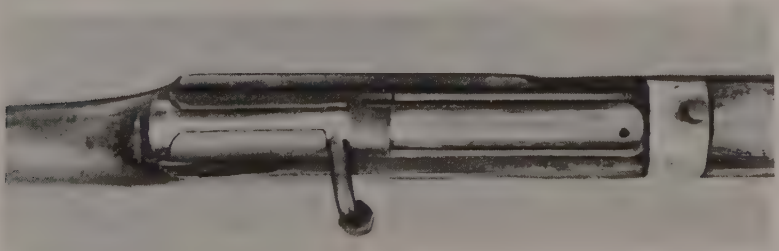


CREDIT: U.S. Army

Soviet 1944 Mosin Nagant carbine in 7.62 mm. This weapon, as modified, is also known as the ChiCom Type 53. This particular weapon was captured in Vietnam in January of 1967.

CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh

A Viet Cong jungle gunsmith produced this excellent copy of a .45 M1911A1 pistol.



CREDIT: John Wootters

Top view of the receiver of the homemade rifle described by John Wootters.

CREDIT: Frank C. Brown
Frank Brown with an M-203 — combination M16 and M79, used in Vietnam mainly by Marines of the 1st Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company . . . but, also loaned to friends.

CREDIT: John Wootters
Writer John Wootters examines an original VC rifle brought back by an Army vet of that war.

CREDIT: Frank C. Brown

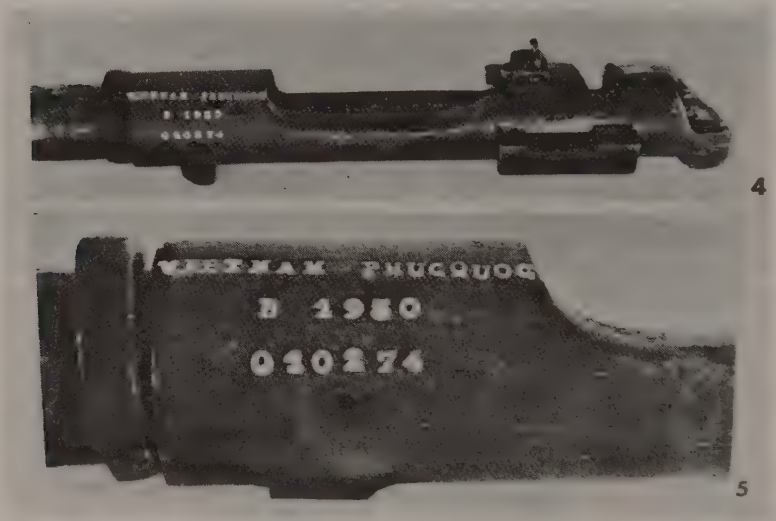
Two Vietnamese scouts working with U.S. forces on clandestine missions . . . favorite weapon was chopped down M-2 carbine, with pistol grip, stubby barrel, and homemade stock.

CREDIT: John Wootters

Top is an original Springfield '03 rifle made at the U.S. Armory. The bottom is the plate of the VC copy of a Springfield rifle.

CREDIT: John Wootters

Handmade Viet Cong gun fires various cartridges through a iron pipe barrel of ½-inch bore. The line of the rifle seems a mite crooked, as well.



CREDIT: John Wootters

Top photo is a Viet Cong copy of a Mauser action receiver, while the bottom shot shows the identification close-up.

CREDIT: U.S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center

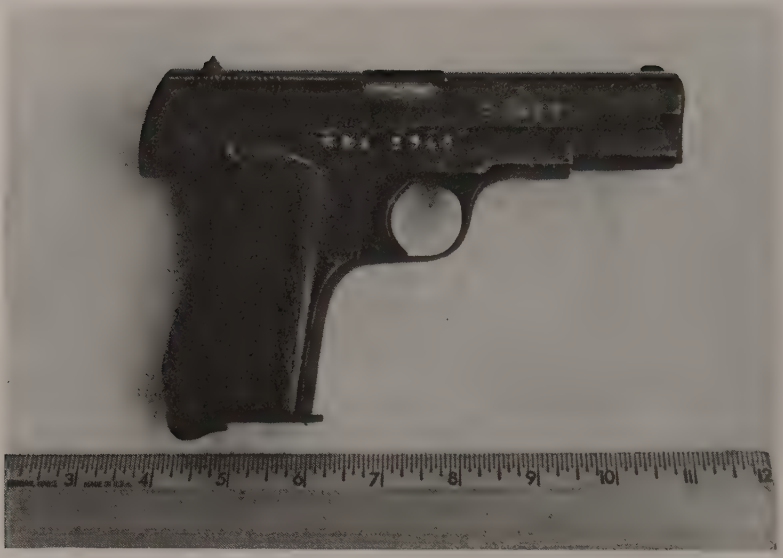
A captured Viet Cong shotgun made from waterpipe and wood in a village area. Tested in the field and rated as unsafe to fire.

CREDIT: Frank C. Brown

Close-up of the chopped-down M-2 carbine favored some South Vietnamese.

CREDIT: Frank C. Brown

Captured VC ordnance included several weapons made in jungle workshops — including modified MAT 49 smgs and drastically cut-down U.S. CARBINES.

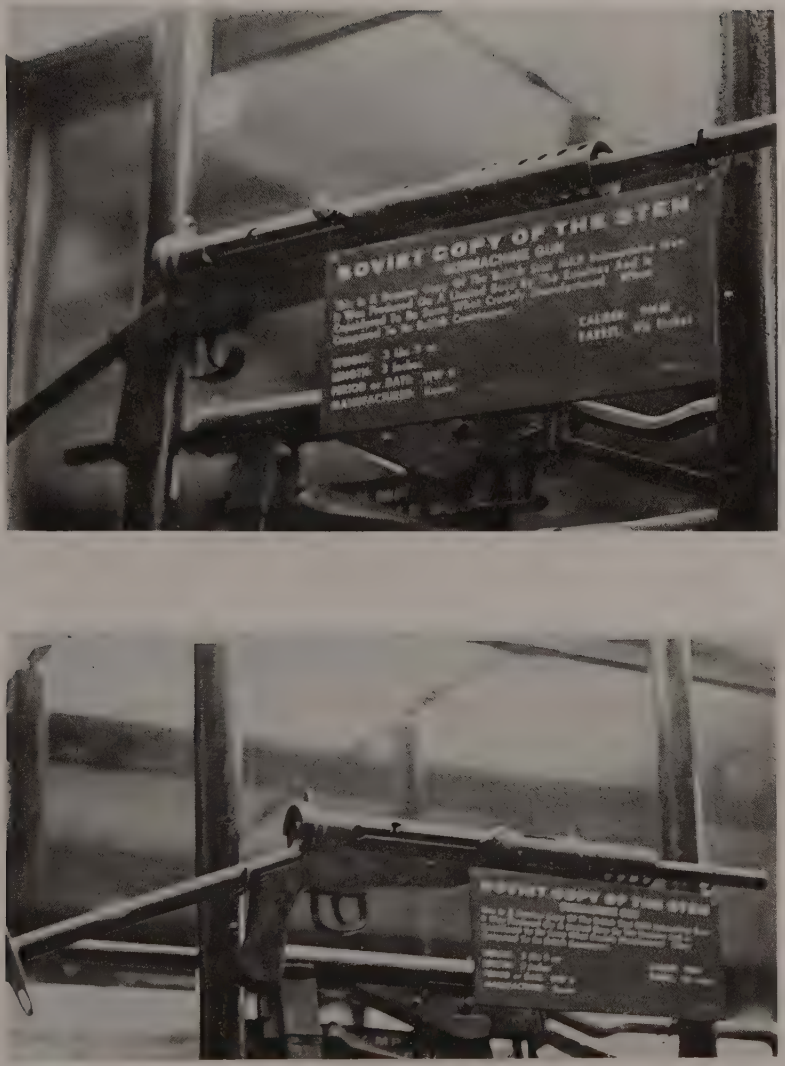


CREDIT: Maj. Richard Keogh

The ChiCom version of the *Sugiura* 8mm pistol. The only difference is in the markings, according to Maj. Keogh.

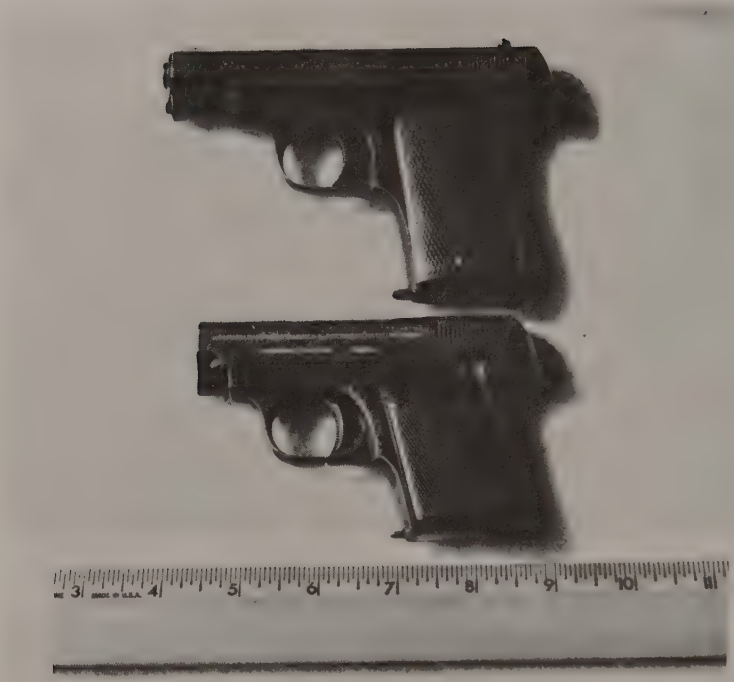
CREDIT: R. L. Hermann, courtesy of AUTO MAG.

Asiatic copy of Browning Model 1900 in .32 ACP.



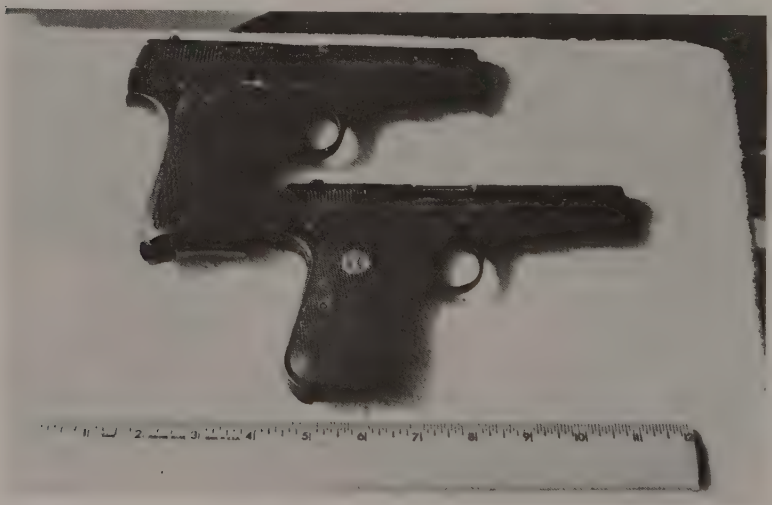
CREDIT: J. David Truby

Now on display at the Museum, Aberdeen Proving Ground, this rare Sten copy was made in Russia. The Russian Stens were used by partisans and some reserve units in WWII. They are crudely manufactured, but highly effective, copies. Behind the Soviet Sten is the German copy, the MP3008.



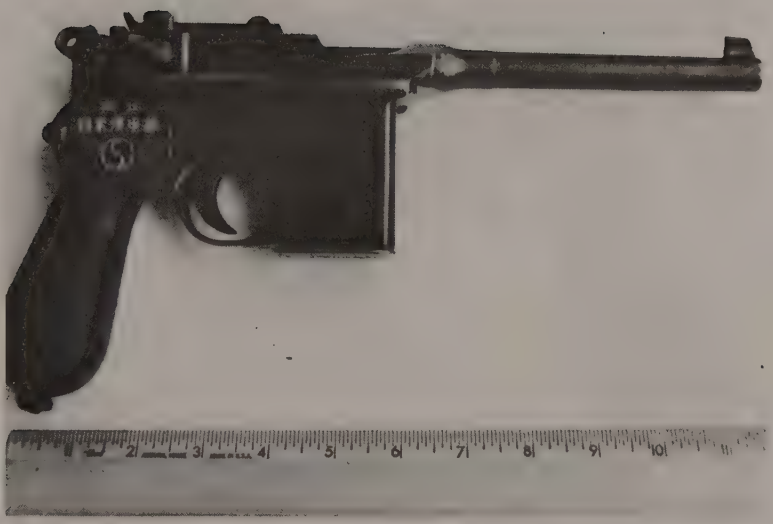
CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh

Sugiura 6.35mm pistol, ser. No. 224, on top, is compared to an FN Browning pistol of the same calibre — bottom.



CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh

Sugiura 8mm pistol (top) compared to .32 Colt Pocket auto pistol.



CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh, courtesy of AUTO MAG
A Chinese copy of the Schnellfeuer pistol. Note arsenal markings.

CREDIT: Major Richard Keogh
Top pistol is the ChiCom copy, in 7.63mm, of the bottom pistol, the 8mm Japanese *Sugiura*. The top pistol's serial No. is 3343, while the original is 2243.

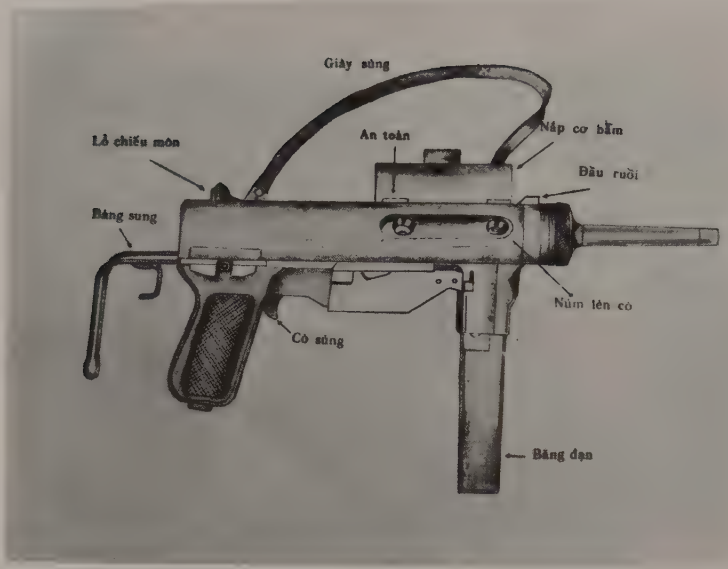
CREDIT: GUNS & AMMO Magazine

This Chinese copy of the Mauser Broomhandle pistol was produced in .45 ACP at the Shansei Arsenal.

CREDIT: Maj. Richard Keogh

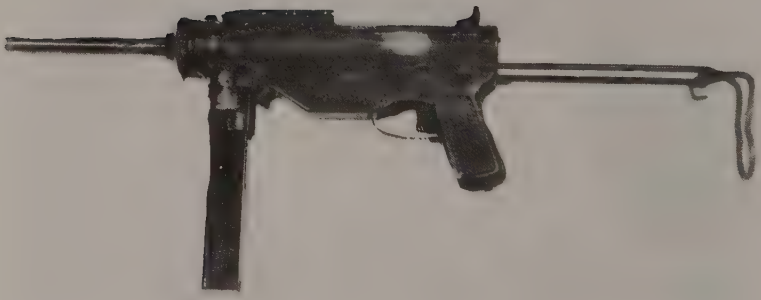
Another Chinese copy of the famed Mauser pistol.

CREDIT: R. L. Hermann, courtesy of AUTO MAG
Asiatic copy of Mauser 1896 Broomhandle pistol.



CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

Chart from South Vietnamese weapons identification sheet describing the ChiCom Model 36 submachine gun.

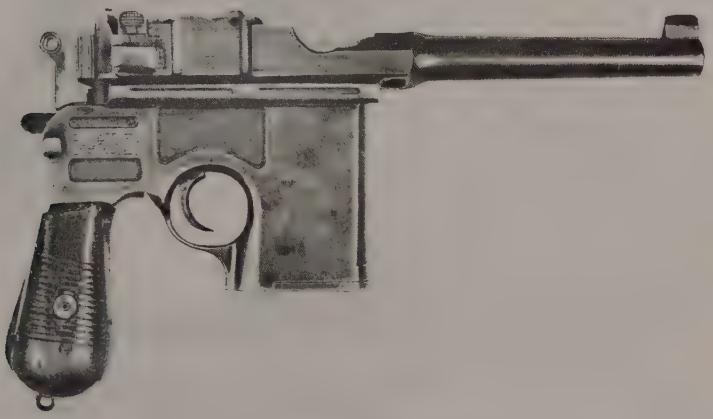


CREDIT: Thomas B. Nelson

The Chinese Model 36 is a modified copy of the U.S. M3A1, and has been manufactured on Formosa since 1950.

CREDIT: Aberdeen Proving Ground

The Chinese copy of the German Mauser Model 98 rifle in 7.92mm is known as the "Chiang Kai Shek" rifle.



CREDIT: Courtesy of Stackpole Publications

One of the most famous Chinese copies is the Mauser military model, which they made in .45 ACP.

CREDIT: Francis Brown

The Chinese Nationalist copy of the 7.92mm Mauser — known as the "Generalissimo" rifle.

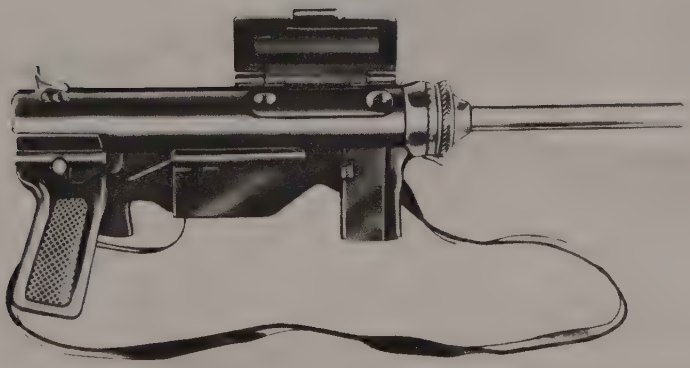
CREDIT: GUNS & AMMO Magazine

A very close copy by an unknown Chinese gun shop of the 1930 commercial model Mauser pistol.

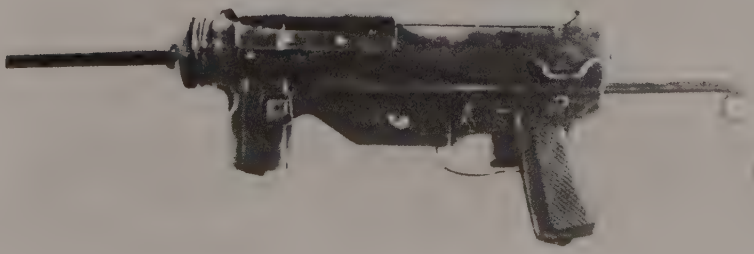
CREDIT: GUNS & AMMO Magazine

A Chinese copy of the Slabside Mauser, produced in an unknown shop, perhaps in the '20s.

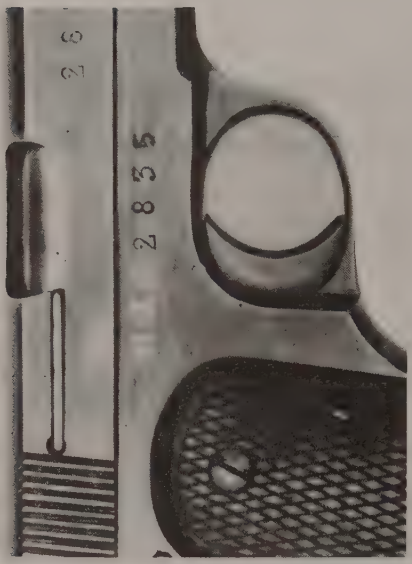
CREDIT: Golden State Arms
The Chinese Hanyang rifle, a modified copy of the German model 88 rifle.



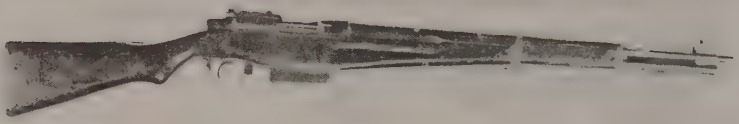
CREDIT: Tom Nelson
A Model 36, Nationalist Chinese copy of the M3A1 submachine gun.



CREDIT: U.S. Army Foreign Science & Technology Center
Another captured ChiCom Type 36 submachine gun.

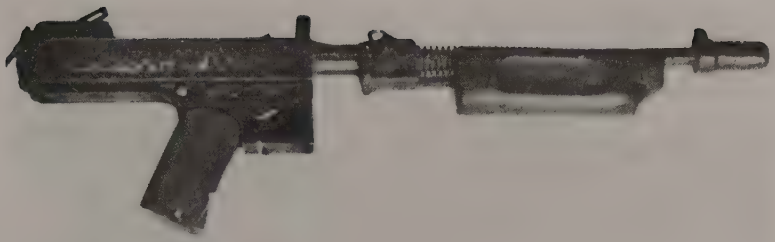


CREDIT: Don Crews Collection
Close-up of the Japanese *Sugiura* pistol showing both domestic markings and serial number.



The Japanese copy of the M1 Garand rifle, known as the Type 5 rifle, it was produced in 7.7mm.

CREDIT: Don Thomas
Very simple construction marked these 8mm home defense weapons designed to combat the allied invasion of Japan in 1945.



CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, A.FP

Long a favorite of Filippino soldiers, the Thompson was a real prize for guerrillas. This battered M1928 had several modifications and repairs from scrap, and was still firing strong when captured in 1950 in Central Luzon.

CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, A.F.P.

New weapons were hard to come by during WWII, so native guerrillas, operating with SOE and OSS help often modified and fixed up what they had on hand to fight the Japanese . . . as witness this British jungle rifle with many homemade alterations and parts.

CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, A.F.P.

During WWII, Philippine guerrillas used homemade stocks and other scraps to repair older rifles, including this M1917 U.S. issue rifle.

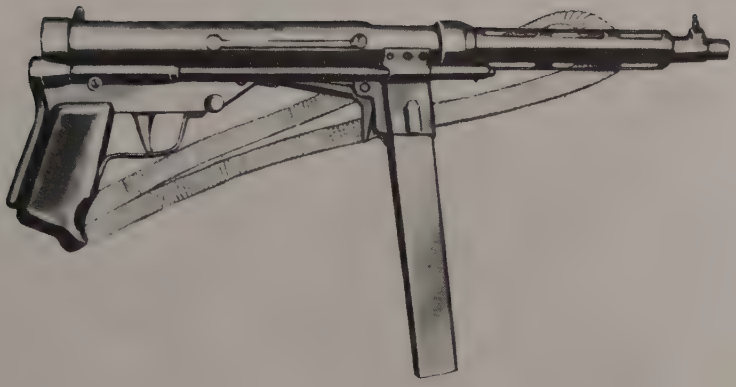
CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, Armed Forces of the Philippines

Japanese .25 calibre rifles were in fair supply among the HUK rebels from 1949 to 1954. Among them was this modification.

CREDIT: David F. Crone
This homemade .38 calibre firearm was captured in Santo Domingo.

CREDIT: Lt. Col. D.C. Villanueva, A.F.P.
This rifle was once a Springfield '03. However, during the rough days of WWII in the Pacific, it was greatly modified in a jungle gunshop.

CREDIT: Lt. Col. D. C. Villanueva, A.F.P.
This M1 carbine, a WWII leftover from the resistance to the Japanese, was modified by HUK guerrillas. It was captured in 1949 by police.



CREDIT: Tom Nelson

The Model BA-52, Burmese version of the Italian Tz-45, which appeared after the end of WWII.

CREDIT: Haganah Archives

Crowd of Haganah ''troops'' around an armoured car during their defense of Jerusalem during the Arab siege in May of 1948. Although some have surplus military weapons, there are several homemade submachine gunes, including a Thompson copy (at extreme left), plus some rifles from the underground gunshops.

CREDIT: Fairways Corporation

Italian partisans struggle through the snow, late in 1944, armed with homemade weapons, plus some air-dropped issue firearms. Leader is carrying a drastically "chopped" M1 carbine.

CREDIT: U.S. Army

The prototype EMP 44 submachine gun, a low-cost automatic weapon designed for last ditch civilian defense in WWII Germany.

CREDIT: Ladigo Valo

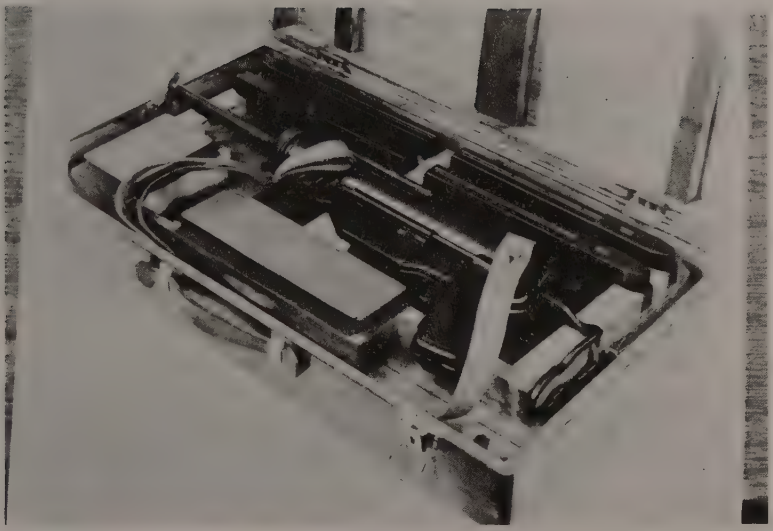
Polish resistance forces with German weapons, Soviet submachine guns, plus a few homemade rifles.

CREDIT: Bundesarchiv

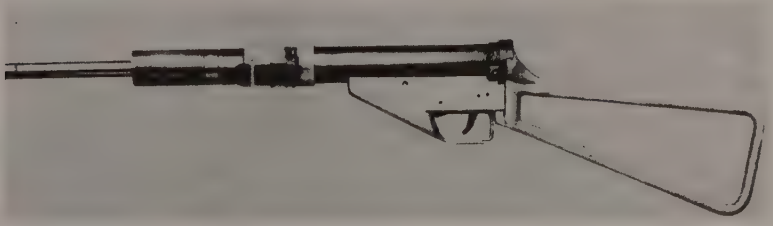
A very rare photo showing the German VGI-5 in action on the Eastern Front late in the war.

CREDIT: Columbia Pictures

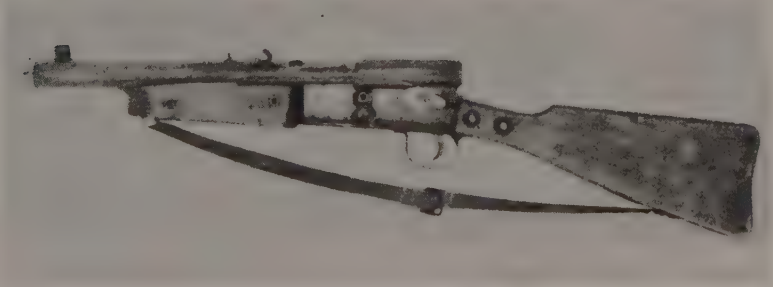
Anthony Quinn holds a German machine pistol improvised from a U.S. Reising submachine gun for a scene in "Guns of Navarone."



CREDIT: Tom Nelson
A presentation Model 37 submachine gun with accessories and extra magazines in its wooden case. The weapon is a copy of the M2A1.

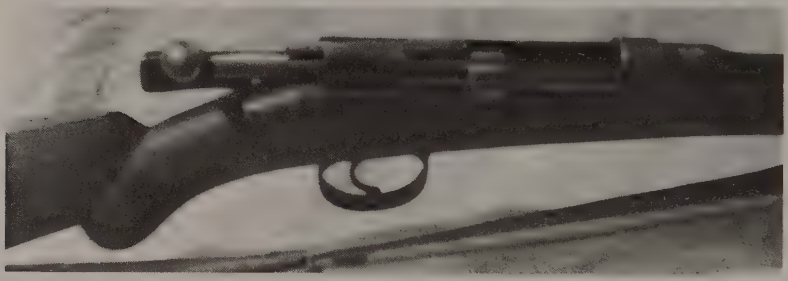


CREDIT: Danish Resistance Museum
Using Sten parts and other materials, Danish resistance gunsmiths produced this improvised submachine gun during WWII.



CREDIT: Don Stoehr
The German VGI-5 "Peoples' Rifle."

CREDIT: John A. Minnery
Rear view of two .303 "Khyber Pass" pistols.



CREDIT: John A. Minnery
The Khyber Pass .303 single shot rifle, all handmade.

CREDIT: John A. Minnery
This .303 hand fabricated Khyber Pass rifle has fake British proof marks on its barrel.

CREDIT: GUNS & AMMO Magazine

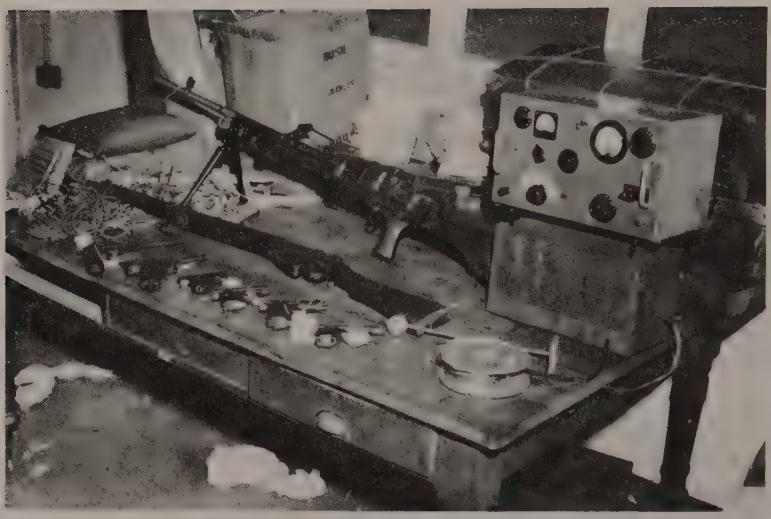
The British experimental conversion is commonly known as the "Sword Guard Gun". The cam path guide for the bolt requires the handguard protection to prevent getting same caught in the mechanism when firing.

CREDIT: GUNS & AMMO Magazine

Produced as a modified prototype by New Zealand ordnance men in 1942, this design was based on the British 1918 conversion of .303 Enfield.

CREDIT: Tom Nelson

A representative sample of the Sten influence on Indonesian homemade submachine guns built and used during the fighting in the late '40s.



CREDIT: CPT. Alan Cowles

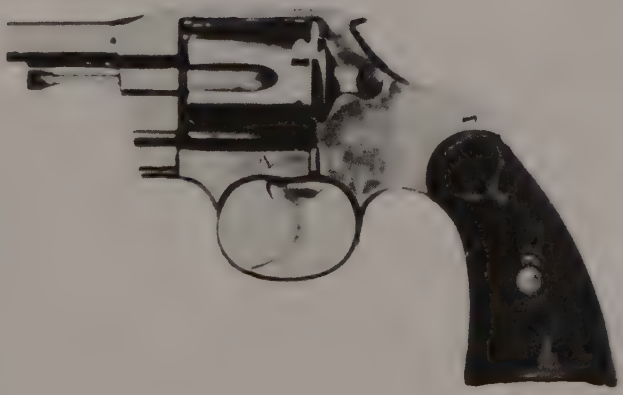
Captured in Ireland in 1970 during an arms sweep, this modified Mauser 1932 model had its barrel cut about as short as possible. Some type of shortened, Sten-type stock — probably homemade from pipe — is attached. Although this is the selective fire model, it is not known if or how this particular weapon saw action.

CREDIT: IRISH TIMES

Illegal materials seized in a IRISM Army raid in Dublin, April of 1958, brought in radio equipment, stolen automatic weapons, plus some modified firearms.

CREDIT: Archivo Casasola

It's either a fake, or a great picture! During the on-going Mexican revolutionary fighting between 1910 and 1918, this Zapatista rebel uses a huge, antique firearm mounted between several rifles for knocking over his enemy.



CREDIT: F. Trillas, S.A.

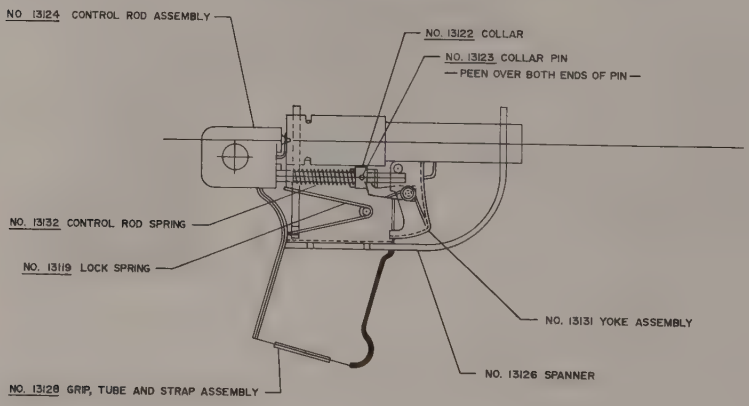
Eufemio Zapata, brother of the famed Mexican soldier and retormer, carried this cut down Colt Army pistol when moving around in Mexico City in 1910 and 1911. It is said he personally sawed off the barrel of this 1908 model U.S. pistol, whose original owner is unknown. Zapata claimed to have taken it from an American mercenary "advising" federal troops.

CREDIT: LESLIE'S AROUND THE WORLD IN PICTURES

An interesting modification . . . a periscope attached to a military rifle for trench firing without exposing the soldier . . . a WWI modification.

CREDIT: Jack Krema

Canadian Made Inglis (Browning) with shoulder stock favored by Chinese officers (Chinese Contract WWII)

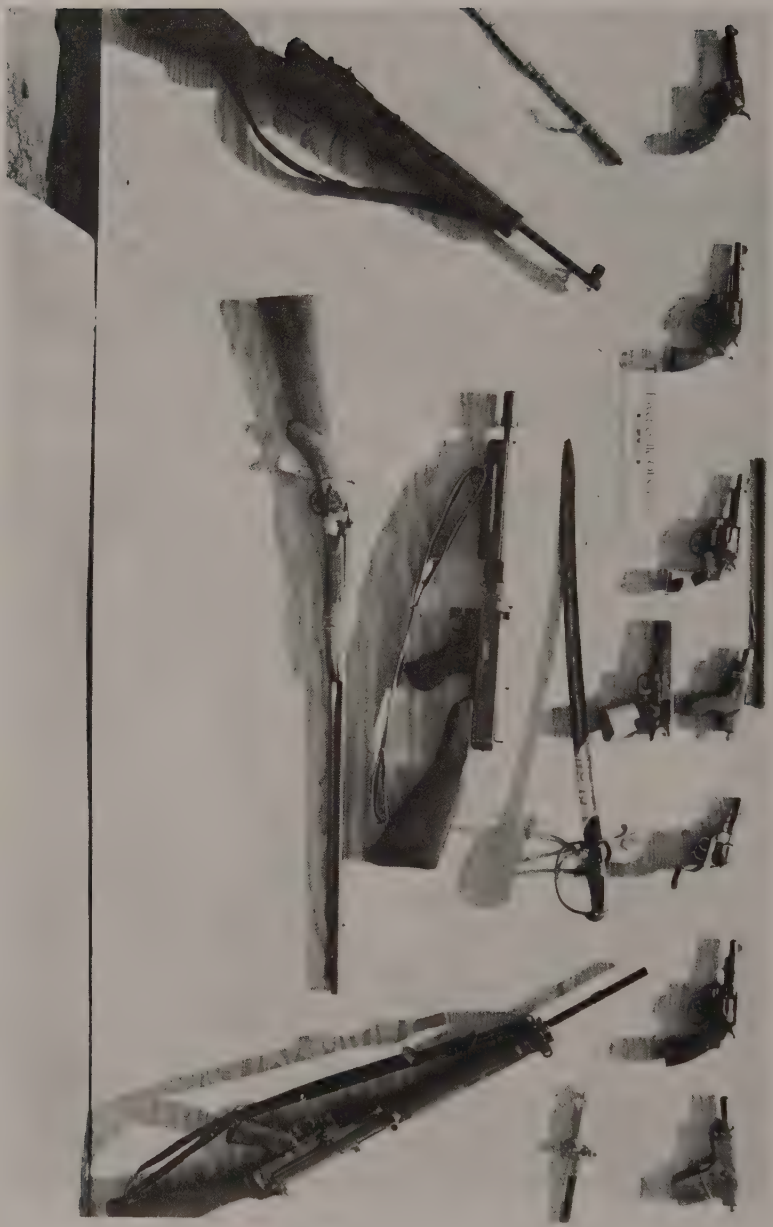

NO. 13124 CONTROL ROD ASSEMBLY
NO. 13122 COLLAR
NO. 13123 COLLAR PIN
— PEEN OVER BOTH ENDS OF PIN —
NO. 13132 CONTROL ROD SPRING
NO. 13119 LOCK SPRING
NO. 13131 YOKE ASSEMBLY
NO. 13126 SPANNER
NO. 13128 GRIP, TUBE AND STRAP ASSEMBLY

CREDIT: OSS Archives

Blueprint design for the FP-45, the famed OSS Liberator, note intentional misnomers.

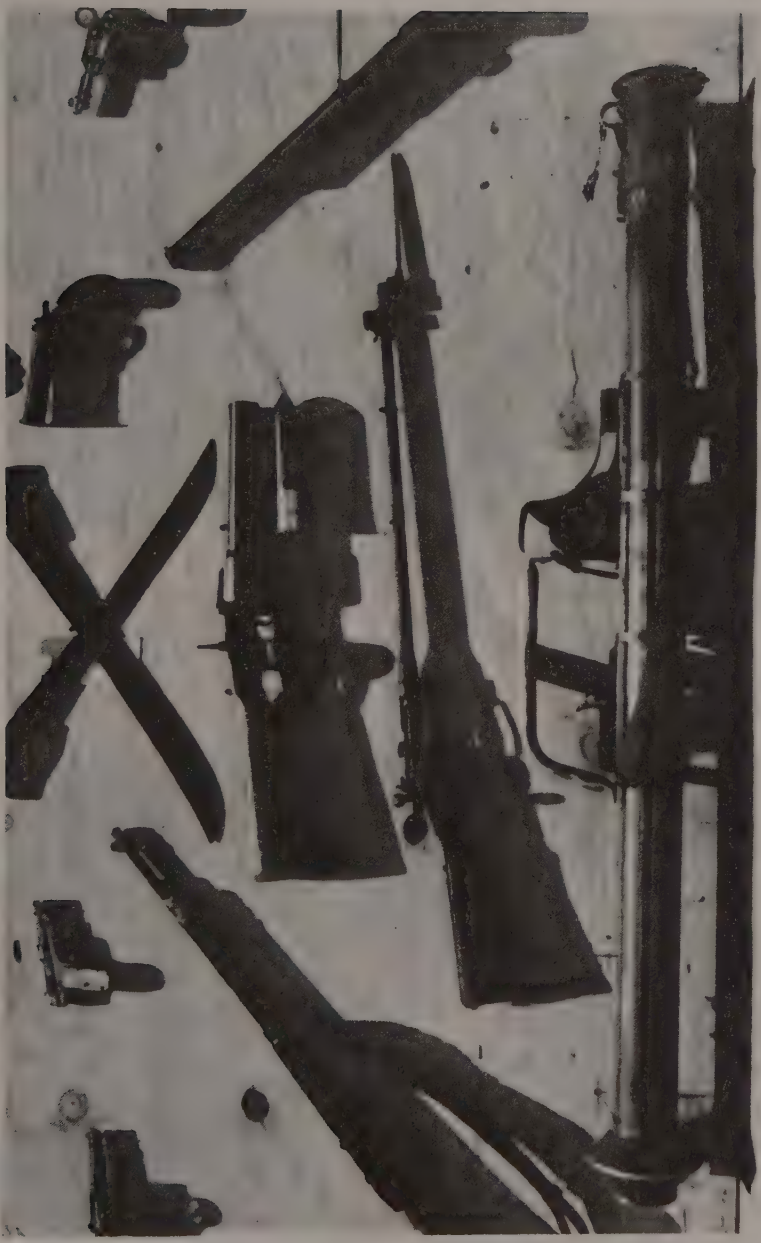
CREDIT: John A. Minnery

Arms and related items turned up in a milk can secreted by the IRA . . . 3 sawed off shotguns, grenades, shotgun shells, bomb-making supplies, various loose cartridges, and Lewis gun operating instructions.



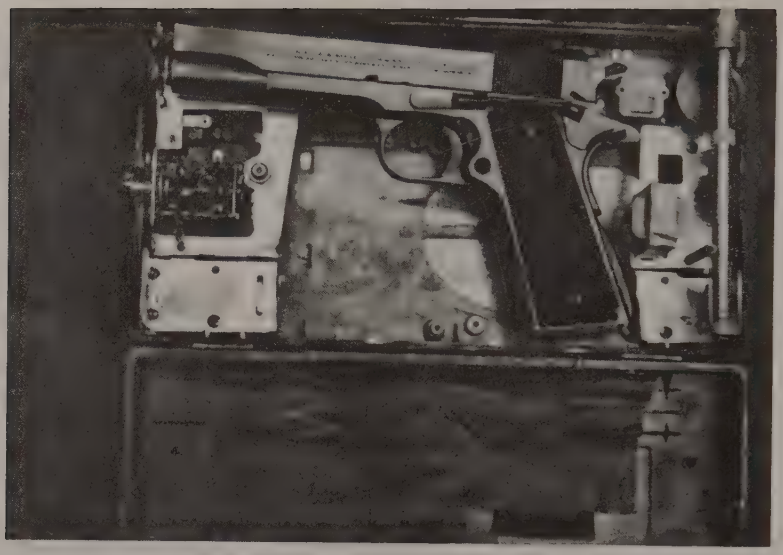
CREDIT: U.S. Army

Display board of weapons captured when 82nd Airborne invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965 shows several homemade and modified firearms.



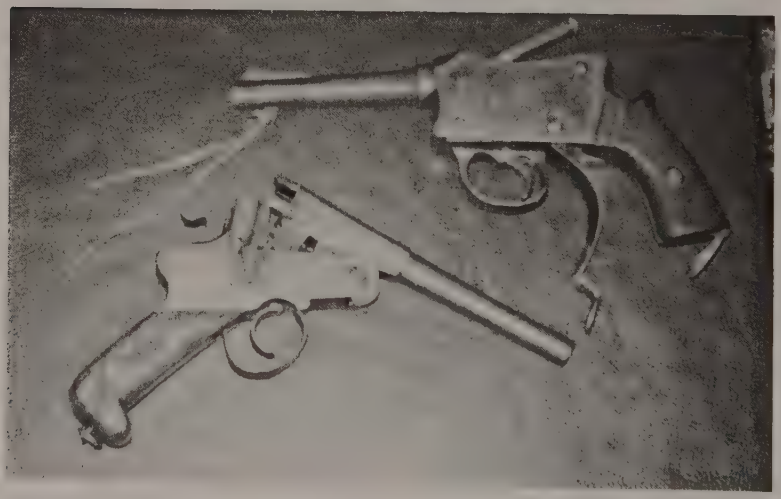
CREDIT: U.S. Army

Troops from the 82nd Airborne captured many weapons from rebels defending their territory during the 1965 invasion by the U.S. Included were a great many homemade and "pieced-together" firearms.



CREDIT: FBI

An unsuccessful smuggler tried to spirit a .45 ACP pistol into the country by hiding it in his radio.



CREDIT: John A. Minnery

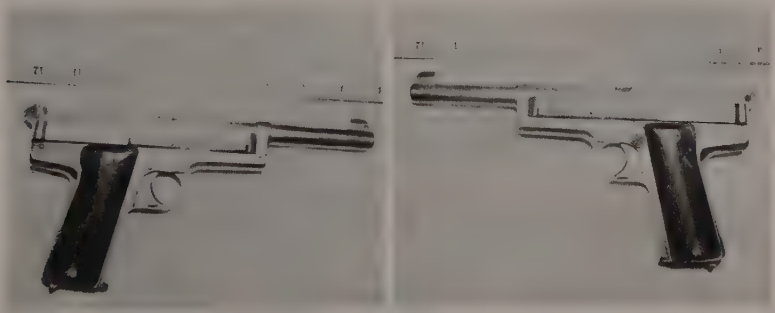
These two .303 pistols were handmade and both fire perfectly. They are, respectively, a Martini and a Tip-Up design.

CREDIT: Joe Schroeder, courtesy of AUTO MAG
An early, handmade automatic pistol, produced in Japan by Tomisiro Komuro in 1906. The weapon is 7.65mm, and only three such weapons are known to exist.

CREDIT: John Tribe Brantford Ontario Police
Skeletonized cut-down Enfield .303.

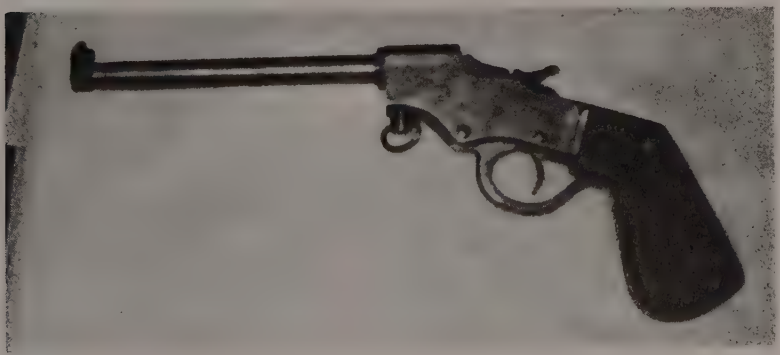
CREDIT: John A. Minnery

A sawed-off 12 gauge shotgun — a product of an underground Canadian gunshop.



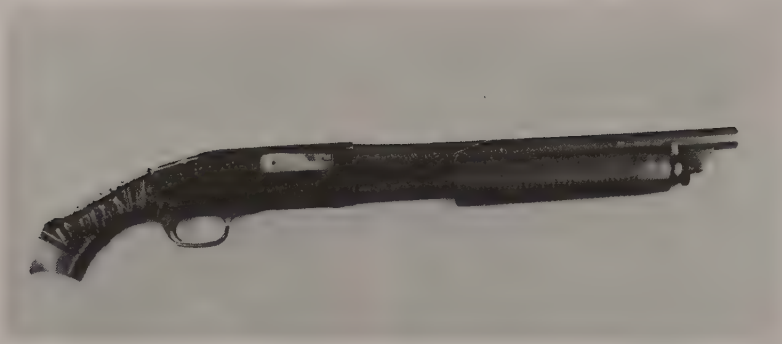
CREDIT: John Cooper, courtesey of AUTO MAG

This pistol was made in his basement by a Bavarian toward the end of WWII.

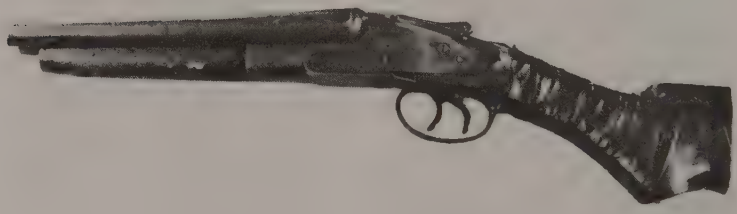


CREDIT: John A. Minnery

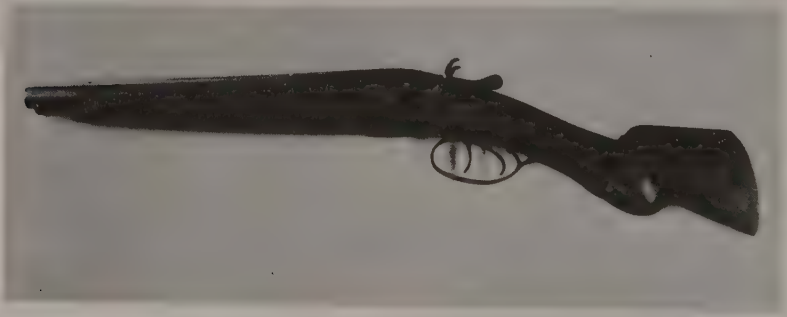
The left side of a cutdown Stevens .22 rifle, using many alterations to convert it to a pistol.



CREDIT: Tom Swearengen
This Stevens Model 325 Whipit gun was converted from a standard sporter. It is now used by Military Police in drug raids.



CREDIT: Tom Swearengen
Crescent Arms originally produced this 12 gauge double barrel as their Peerless Model, but a murder-minded hoodlum sawed it off to a 9½ inch barrel and cut the stock.

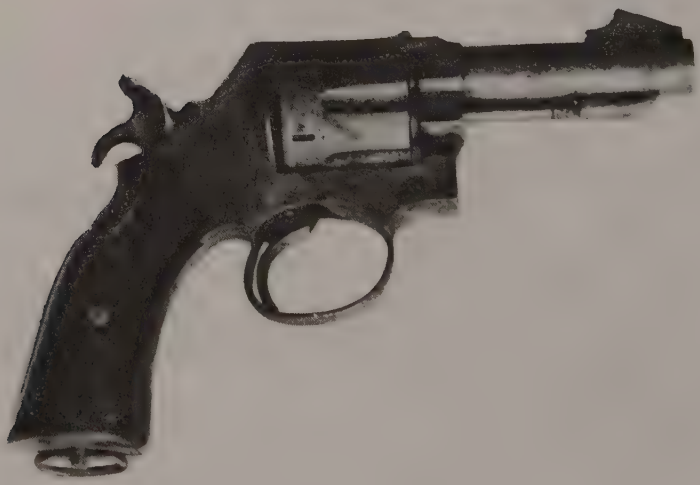


CREDIT: Tom Swearengen
W. Richard 12 gauge shotgun with barrel sawed off to 11½ inches.

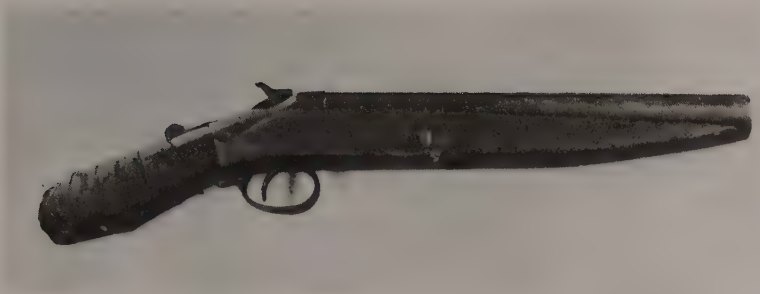
CREDIT: Kingsley P. Karnopp
An 1850-ish mechanical machine gun, whose inventor is unknown.

CREDIT: Eddie Reider
A Dolne "Apache" pistol, popular with French underworld figures some years ago.

CREDIT: FBI
Baby Face Nelson's conversion of a .45 pistol into a fully automatic weapon — on display at FBI headquarters.

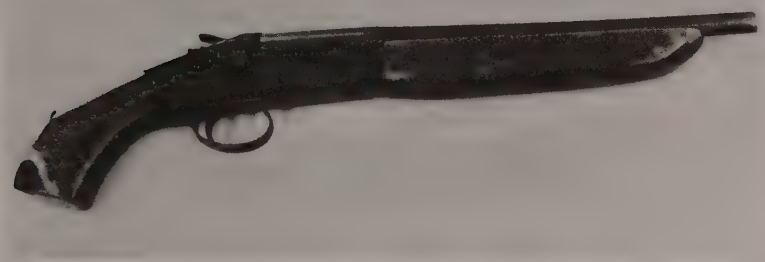


CREDIT: Lt. Col. D.C. Villanueva, A.F.P.
This homemade, "factory" produced .38 calibre pistol was first circulated illegally in 1966, and cost from $180 to $300 for outlaws to buy on the black market.



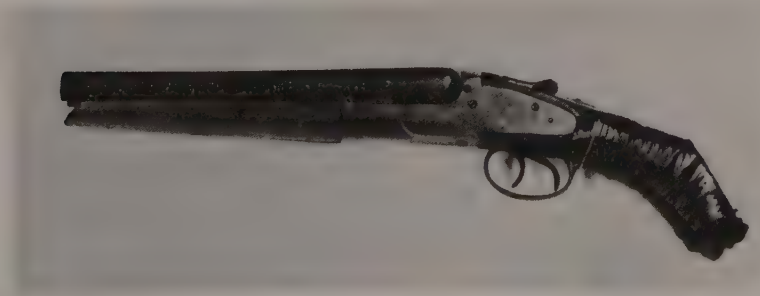
CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

This New White Powder Wonder, a 12 gauge shotgun, was cut down by a criminal to an overall length of 17½ inches, with a barrel of 10½ inches.



CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

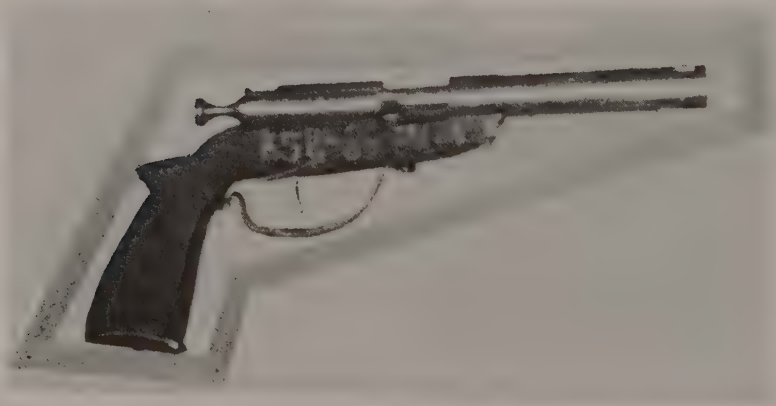
A nefarious gent cut this Springfield Model 947, .410 gauge shotgun down to a 13-inch barrel, and shortened the stock to a pistol grip.



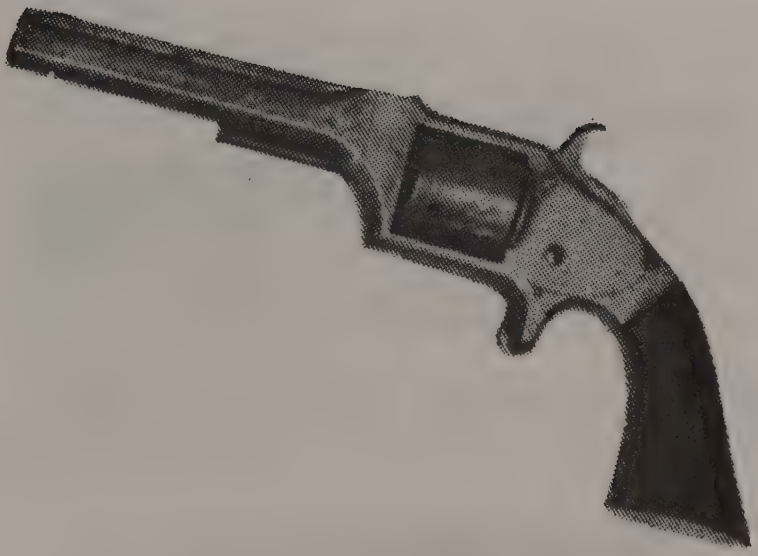
CREDIT: Tom Swearengen

Made from a 16 gauge Peerless double, this is characterized as a typical conversion job to a Whipit gun. This one, with barrel lengths of just over 9 inches, was taken from an unsavory character in South Carolina by BATF agents.

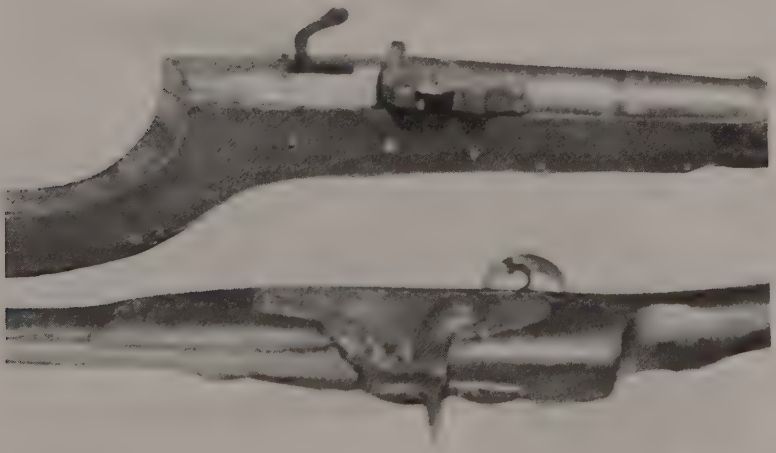
CREDIT: Logan Township Supervisors
Nine homemade firearms were turned over to police by the man who made them from old rifle barrels and other scrap materials with no criminal intent. They are examined by the Logan Township (Pa.) Board of Supervisors.



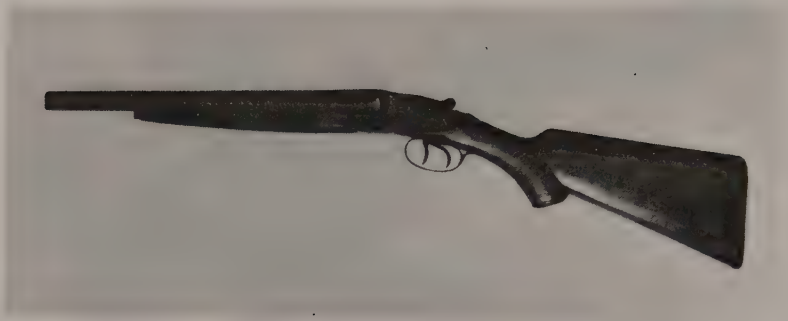
CREDIT: John A. Minnery
A .22 rifle was sawed off and modified to suit pistol design.



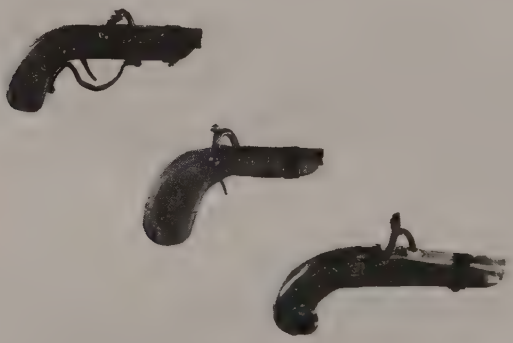
CREDIT: Golden State Arms
An American imitation of the famed Smith & Wesson revolver . . . actual manufacturer of this weapon is unknown.



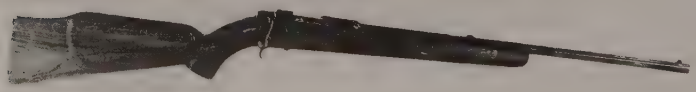
CREDIT: J. David Truby
Actions of the Indian matchlock and the North African percussion rifle.



CREDIT: Tom Swearengen
This L.C. Smith double barrel was produced by Hunter Arms Company, and altered by someone in the Beaufort, South Carolina, County Sheriff's office.



CREDIT: John Foote
Trio of early percussion pistols by expert arms designer John Foote — made when he was a youngster.



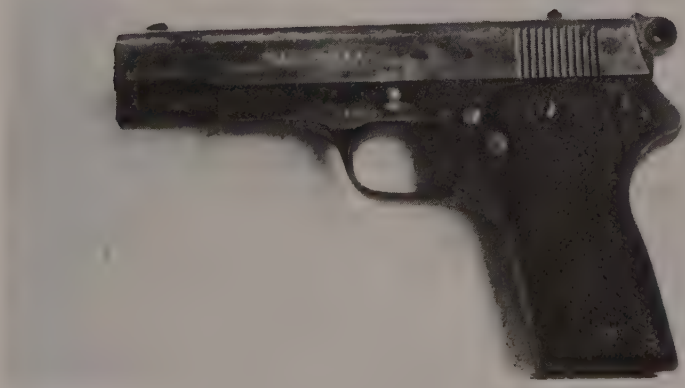
CREDIT: John Foote
Handmade, homemade rifle design — produced and totally the work of John Foote as a youngster.

CREDIT: John Foote

A percussion revolver by John Foote, designed and made by hand by Foote as a youngster.

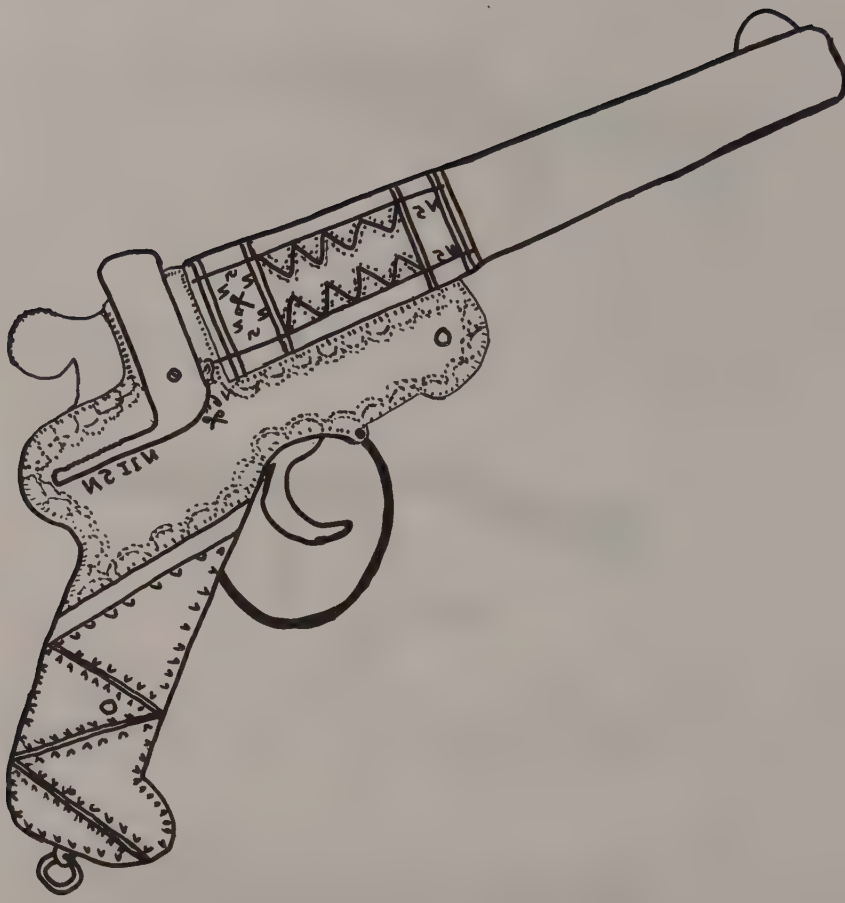
CREDIT: John Foote

A modified Thompson-influenced semiautomatic arms design done by John Foote while still a high school student. Now a premier arms designer, John Foote did and does all his own machine and wood work for his prototypes.



CREDIT: R. L. Hermann, courtesy of AUTO MAG

This is an Asiatic copy of the Browning Model 1900 pistol in 32 ACP.

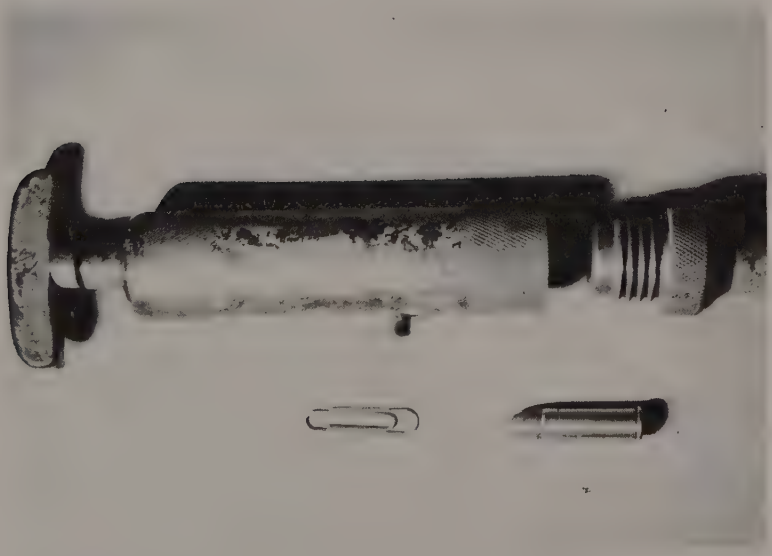


CREDIT: John Minnery

Sketch of one example of the famous "Khyber Pass" copies and improvisations of British firearms. This handgun was designed to fire .303 rifle ammunition — and did! Note fake proof marks on barrel.

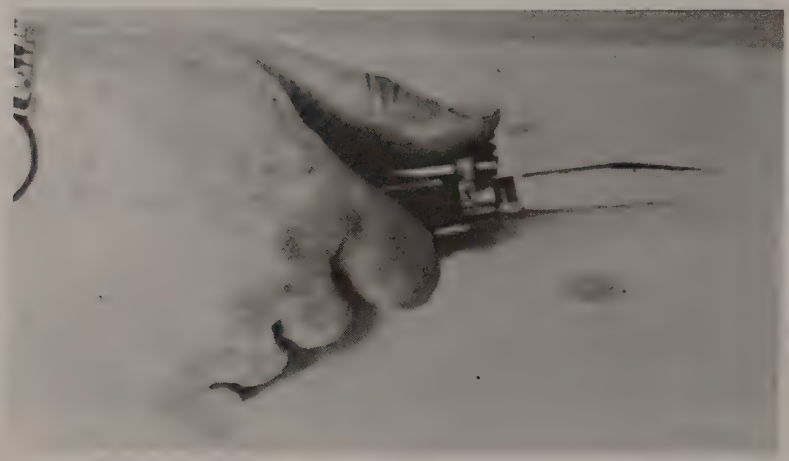
CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

A zip gun confiscated by the Baltimore PD.



CREDIT: FBI

This deadly firing extinguisher is actually a home fire extinguisher which has been converted into a single shot .38 calibre weapon. It tested as being effective and lethal at short ranges.

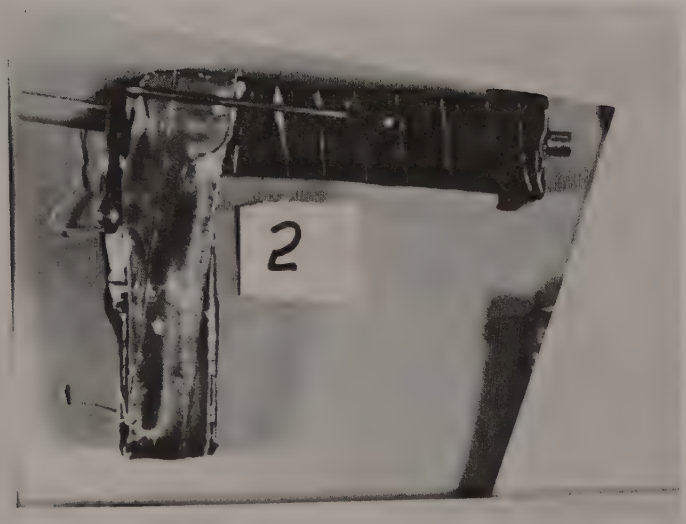


CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police

Proper method for using the pistol knife during a gang war . . . disguising the handgun until the last minute. This one saw use on the '50s.

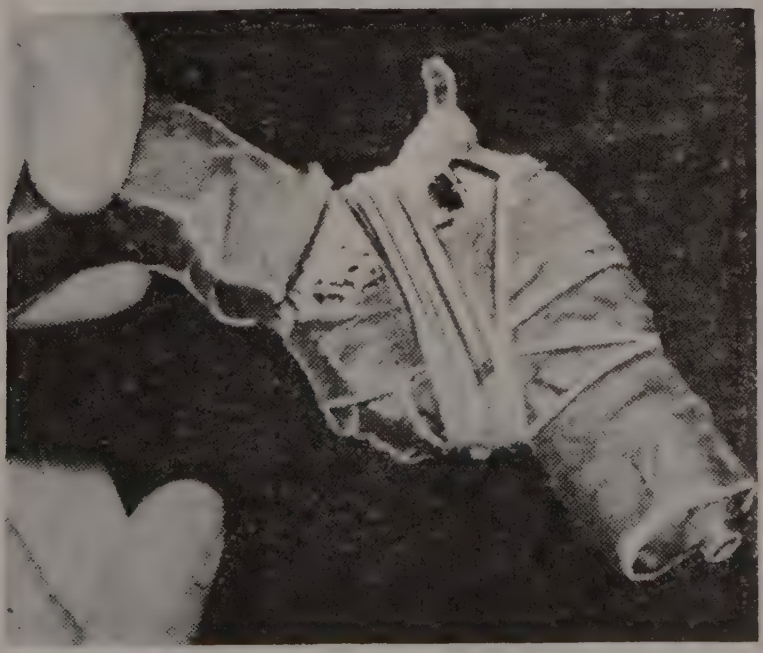
CREDIT: Leslie L. Smith

Custom conversion of the pellet gun into a .44 calibre firearm. Made in a classroom situation (mentioned in the text).



CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

Another example of a "classic" zip gun.

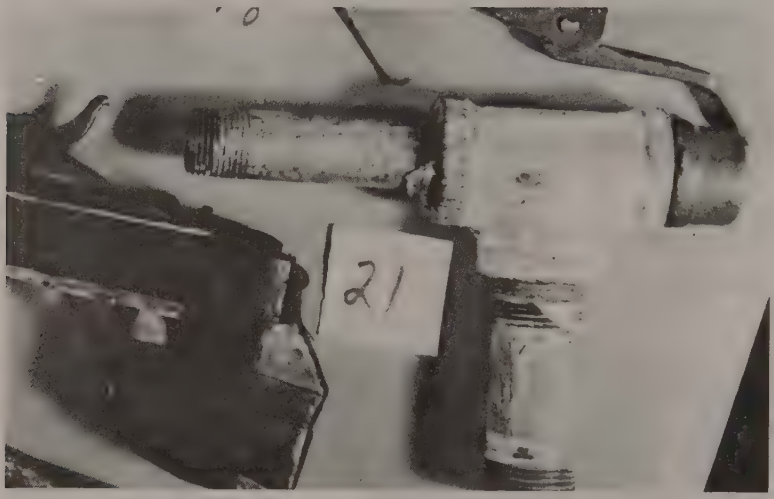


CREDIT: PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

A zip gun confiscated by Philadelphia police — believed to be the murder weapon in a robbery killing of a Philadelphia bakery driver in the early '60s.

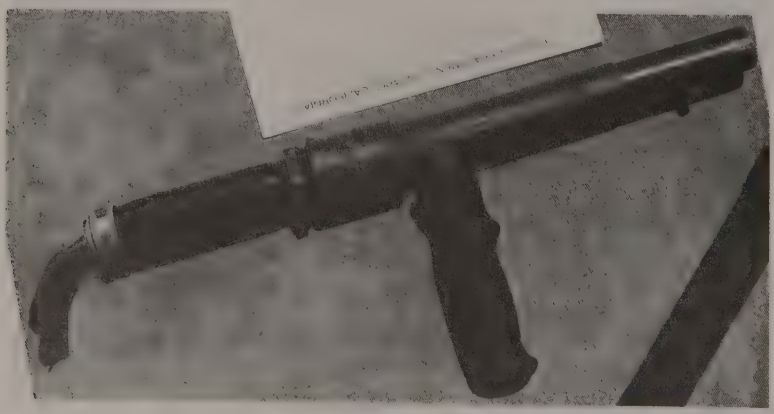
CREDIT: FBI

A zip gun assembled from survival flare gun sold at Sporting Goods Stores, etc.



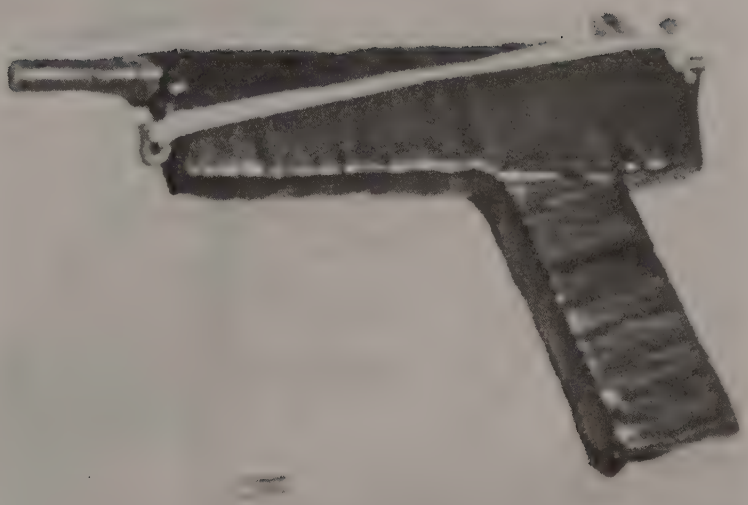
CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

Nothing original — but, no less a killer — a waterpipe zip gun.

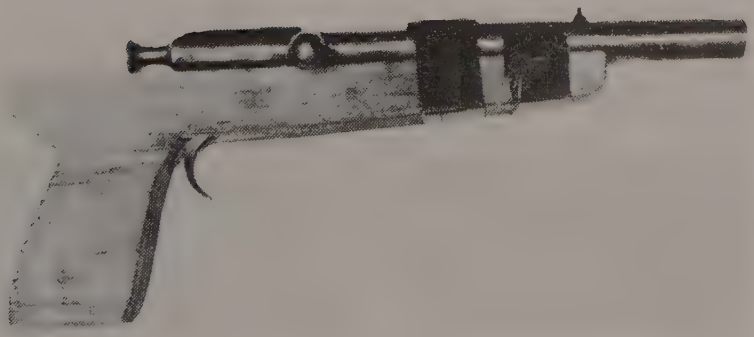


CREDIT: CPT. W. C. Simmons, Ontario (California) Police Department

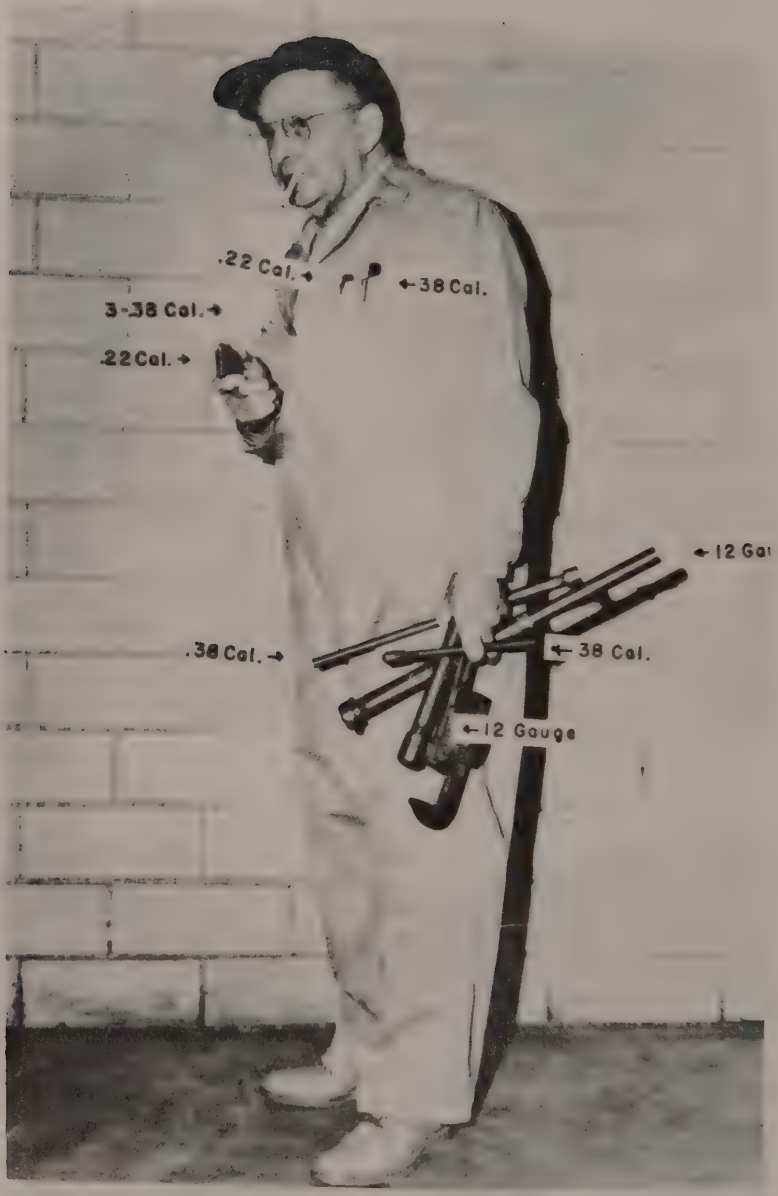
The 12 gauge plumber's pieces shotgun confiscated by the Ontario, California, Police Department.



CREDIT: Timothy F. Sullivan
A classic street gun — .22 calibre with cartridge.

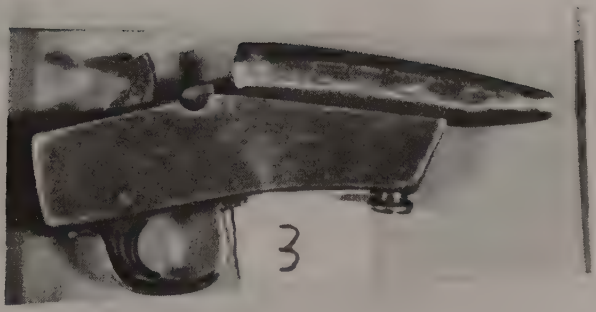


CREDIT: John Minnery
Zip gun with carved wooden stock was liberated in Canada.



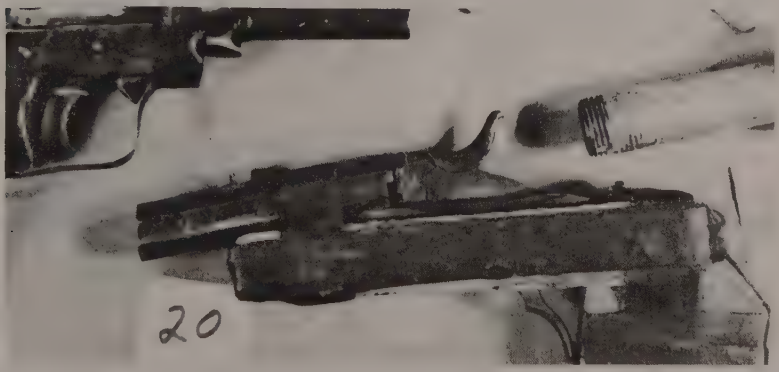
CREDIT: Pennsylvania State Police

Your "Friendly Neighborhood Plumber" is carrying a total of 10 improvised firearms. We've spotted them for you. If they don't do the job he can always clobber you with the wrench.



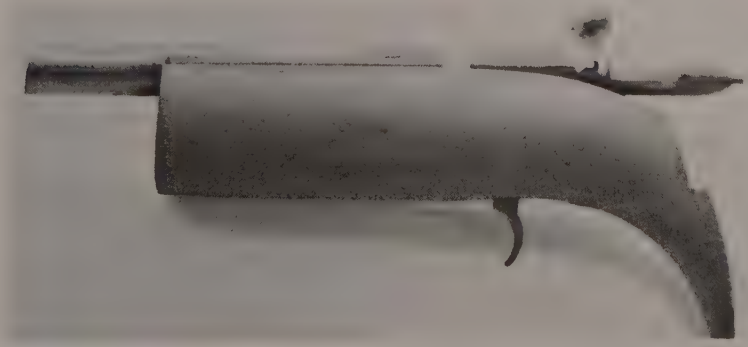
CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

Street gang member took a Remington .22 rifle action and cut it way down to a handgun operation.



CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

A cutdown Belgian .22 rifle action formed the basic guts of this crude-mounted zip gun.

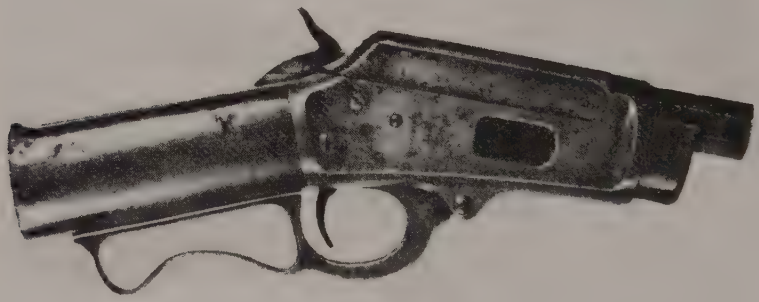


CREDIT: Paul W. Wells

A stubby, but deadly, conversion of a .22 rifle ended up in a murder in Natchez, Mississippi.

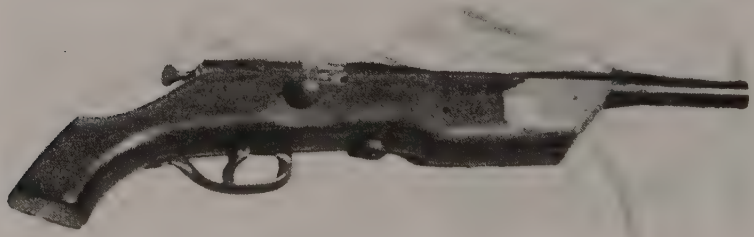
CREDIT: Joseph Reitz

Another fine Remington action falls to the gang gunsmith to produce a .22 calibre street gun for a juvenile.



CREDIT: Leslie L. Smith

This radically altered Marlin .38 40 rifle was found near the work site of a Florida Road Gang (prison system). The barrel was cut to just over 2 inches, with the overall length, 10 inches. The muzzle blast was overwhelming.



CREDIT: Timothy F. Sullivan

A standard modification of a .22 single shot rifle for street use.

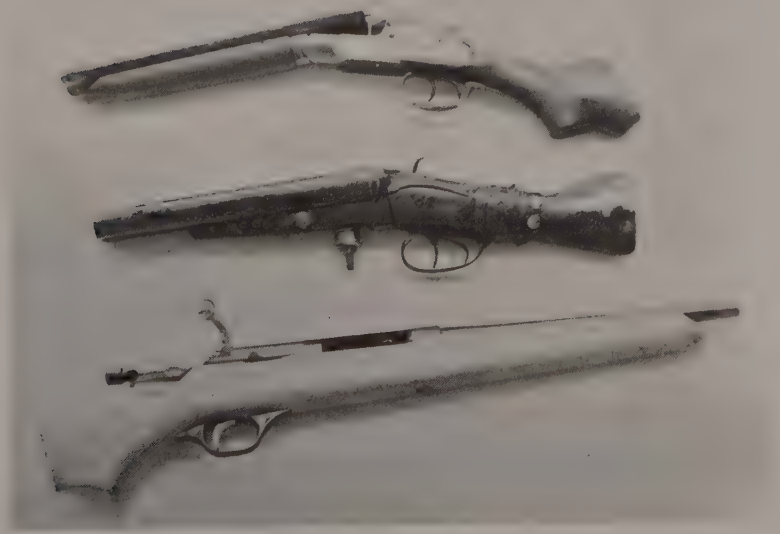
DEADLY WEAPON

"FIREARM MADE FROM BICYCLE SPOKE"

Match heads are ground and inserted into hole No. 1, tack or other object inserted into hole No. 1. Lighted match or heat is applied under point No. 1. When heated, object is propelled though the air.

CREDIT: Joseph Reitz, Baltimore PD

A crude street gun made from a common bicycle spoke.



CREDIT: Paul W. Wells

These illegal conversions, two sawed off shotguns and a cutdown .22 rifle, were confiscated by Mississippi police.

Allon, Yigal. SHIELD OF DAVID. NY: Random House, 1970.

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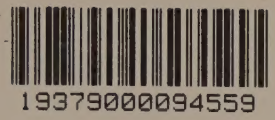

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